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PATCHWORK.

BY

CAPTAIN BASIL HALL,

R.N., F.R.S.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON :

EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCXIII.

LONDON:

PRALBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

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H14p
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PREFACE.

WHEN this work was nearly ready for publication, it became necessary to decide upon a Title ; but this, which at first sight may seem a very easy matter, proved not a little embarrassing. There were, it is true, innumerable titles for me to choose from, and sufficiently descriptive of the work ; but every one of these had been worn so utterly threadbare, as to be quite useless, or worse than useless—hurtful.

After much consideration, it occurred to me that the term **PATCHWORK** would not only describe the book correctly, but would carry with it, so far as I knew, the merit of novelty.

On propounding this idea to my Publisher, he opposed it stoutly, and even stated in round terms that such an appellation would inevitably “damn the work,”—alleging, among other reasons, that the word was associated only with beggars and bed-covers.

In my reply, I said that I saw no great harm in a bed-cover of patchwork, if the pieces were of good texture in themselves, and were so placed in respect to colour and pattern that they made a pleasing whole. I added, as in duty bound, that as I had really no particular love for this title, I should be most happy if he would suggest any other, equally descriptive of the book to which it was prefixed.

On receiving no answer to this appeal, I applied to several literary, and other friends, requesting them to say what they thought of my proposed title, and I confess I was a little shaken to find them, one and all, open-mouthed in condemnation of my poor PATCHWORK. Some said it was "singing small;" others, that it was "infra dig.": several condemned it as telling too much, and one or two as telling too little. Most of these critics, as a matter of course, quoted Shakspeare about the little value of a name, but only to show their own ingenuity, by inverting the poet's idea, and contending that there was "much in a name."

I thought it would never do to christen my book with a name to which all the world objected ; and as they had shown such alacrity in finding out that the title I had chosen would not suit. I thought it but reasonable that they should help me to something better. So I wrote again and again ; but even the delightful penny-post, which has oiled the wheels of business and pleasure over the whole country, refused to bring me a single new idea on the subject. I therefore began to fear that I should be obliged to usher my book into the world without any name at all, when an ingenious correspondent suggested that I should call it BRECCIA.

Now, this title possessed the advantages of being quite new, and of being totally unintelligible ; so that while its novelty might attract notice, its hieroglyphic character would prevent people being too soon let into the secrets of the story.

My correspondent was quite sensible, indeed, that as the greater part of mankind are neither Italian scholars nor geologists, the word he proposed would fail to convey the meaning intended—or.

for that matter, any meaning whatever, and therefore he suggested that an explanatory note should be added, to tell what the author wished to say.

I confess the originality of this notion of having a note on the title-page tickled my fancy so much, that I set about concocting it immediately; but I was not at all aware of the difficulty of the task.

I had first to make a note to explain that BRECCIA meant PUDDINGSTONE; then another, to state that this stone meant CONGLOMERATE; and finally, a third note to signify that the "formation" so called, consisted of "Rounded water-worn fragments of rocks or pebbles, cemented together by another mineral substance, which may be of a silicious, calcareous, or argillaceous nature,"—in other words, of a flinty, an effervescent, or of a muddy character. To which definition, for the benefit of the unlearned, I could not do less than add the etymology, viz., "*Con*" together, and "*Glomero*" to heap; that is, in the language of the Geologists, *Travelled materials heaped together*.

This title, so expanded and explained, was, no doubt, highly descriptive of the wave-worn and

weather-beaten character of the component parts of my book, but I had some apprehensions that it might seem rather presumptuous to give it a title so ambitious as to require—like the Grand Lama—three interpreters before any one could arrive at its meaning.

I therefore returned to my PATCHWORK, which name, at all events, tells its own story in plain English—and if it only tells it well enough in the opinion of the public in general, I shall be satisfied.

Portsmouth,

19th December, 1849.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ALPS AND THE ANDES.

WHEN it is considered that so small a part of the whole of France has any pretensions whatever to beauty of scenery, it seems strange to many ears that the epithet “Belle” should be applied to that country. This apparent contradiction has been explained, in a manner no doubt quite satisfactory to the natives, by saying that it is not the physical or picturesque character of the land which is alluded to, but rather the moral excellence of the people, the solidity of their principles, and the worth as well as permanence of their institutions, social and political, which entitle the nation to be so called. Some ascribe the term to the splendid achievements—“*les belles choses*”—of the armies of France. Others say that “*La belle France*” means the fine, rich, noble, productive, populous, warlike, country; that the term in discussion has nothing to do with its beauty, either moral or physical. Be this as it may, I must confess that I,

at least, exchanged the prospect of “La belle France” for that of homely Switzerland, the first time I had visited either, with a degree of satisfaction which I cannot, and shall not, attempt to describe. Indeed, it is well to skip entirely the copious raptures which burst from all our party, and I suppose do from every other, when they have climbed the intervening ridges of the Jura chain, and come all at once in sight of the Lake of Geneva, backed by Mont Blanc and its attendant range of Alps.

On first viewing these wonderful mountains, though under great advantages of position and weather, I felt grievously disappointed. The vertical angle which they subtended, that is to say, the portion of the sky which they filled above the horizon, was so small, compared to what my imagination had pictured and led me to expect, that I could scarcely suppress, along with the disappointment, a feeling of contempt. I did not go quite so far, indeed, as the cockney who persevered in thinking Primrose Hill superior to Mount Etna, but I did think the Alps had been much overpraised, and that other hills—Scottish, Welsh, and Irish—had been unduly depreciated in the scale of grandeur and elevation. It is true, that when I came to wander far and near among the Swiss mountains, and learned something of their real height from the labour and time required

to surmount even their lowest and most accessible shoulders, and when I viewed them close at hand on every side, I was gradually taught to respect their magnitude, and to admire their innumerable and infinitely varied beauties. So that, after visiting them twice, first on going to Italy, and again on coming back, I bade them adieu with a very different feeling from that which I had experienced on being first presented to them ; just as one parts from a highly-informed and agreeable new acquaintance, whom, at the time we were first introduced, we had thought a common-place personage whose merits had been exaggerated.

Still, as I afterwards found out, I had formed on these early visits by no means a just conception of their true magnificence. All this is quite natural and easily understood, and what every person who has had opportunities of trying the experiment must have found to be true ; but as there are, perhaps, not many persons who have had the means of putting the grandeur and beauty of these same Alps to such a test as the accidents of my professional life have thrown in my way, the resulting impression produced by the comparison may be thought interesting. It requires, indeed, an extensive, as well as a varied, acquaintance with mountains to perceive that the comparison of one vast ridge with another, under circumstances which are

calculated to bring their respective merits properly before us, whether of sublimity or of picturesque beauty, has not the effect of depreciating either, but, on the contrary, adds to the essential interest and importance which belong in common to such stupendous scenes.

Not long after taking leave of the Alps, professional avocations called me to South America, where it so happened that a continuous series of duties on that station put it in my power to see the Andes along a line of coast extending, with only occasional short interruptions, between three and four thousand miles! This enormous range stretched from the southern parts of Chili, in latitude 48° South, very nearly to California, in latitude 20° North. My good fortune—for I shall ever consider it such—was not limited to looking at these gorgeous mountains from a distance, as I had opportunities, from time to time, of landing, and examining them close at hand. I must mention, however, one severe disappointment which I experienced incidentally in the course of the voyage in question. The service on which the ship was employed having taken us to Guayaquil, we were told fifty times a-day by the natives, that their city commanded, in clear weather, one of the very best views anywhere to be seen of their great Chimborazzo, and consequently, they said, the grandest in all

the world. Alas! the weather was not once clear during our stay; so that, after lingering in the neighbourhood as long as the duty I was employed to execute could possibly admit of, I was reluctantly compelled to sail away, without having seen the summit of the grandest peak in all the Cordilleras for one single moment unveiled!

On returning to Switzerland, fifteen years after the first visit, I made sure, that this long experience of the stupendous and still more elevated Andes, along the coasts of Chili, Peru, Quito, and Mexico, must prove fatal to the grandeur of the Alps. But the result was so much the reverse that it was difficult to believe some geological upheaving of the ground had not taken place in the interval; so enormously did the elevation and general sublimity of the Swiss mountains appear to have been magnified! Instead, therefore, of being degraded by the comparison, they were exalted; while the beauty of their exquisite scenery seemed vastly to surpass that of anything I had seen even among the tropical districts of the Andes.

It then became clear, upon reviewing all that had passed in my mind, that on first seeing the Alps, I had judged them by some purely ideal and false standard, which, from resting upon a very slender experience of mountain scenery, furnished no satisfactory or adequate scale. There was

wanting, in short, that comparative standard or estimate of heights and distances which the actual examination of analogous scenes could alone furnish; and, therefore, it was not until I had become quite familiar with the vast chains, or Cordilleras of the Andes, in all their variety of magnificence, that I became qualified to form any right judgment of the kindred glories of the Alps, and especially of that most interesting of them all, “the monarch of mountains,” the beautiful Mont Blanc!

The purposes of our journey, however, not being limited to scenery, when we came to Geneva we delivered our letters, and set about visiting the residents; and nothing, certainly, could be more hospitable or more kind to us than these good people were. But we were by this time mountain-mad; and even had the charms—literary, scientific, and social—of the society of that celebrated city been ten times more fascinating than they were, they must have proved unavailing in keeping us back from the hills, into the valleys of which we longed to plunge—to which we often looked, and of which we exclusively spoke, with an impatience scarcely civil to our obliging entertainers. They, it is true, had long become so familiarised to the scene, as to have grown almost callous to the wonders, beauties, and other endless charms which lay

at their very thresholds. The science and literature of Geneva, and the graces of a refined state of manners, cemented together and rendered available for the business of life by that blessing of all blessings, political freedom and independence, based on substantial principles, would at any other time, and even then did, in some degree, engage our attention. But the vehement enthusiasm excited by the actual presence of the higher Alps, the mysterious solemnity of what we were told of the eternal glaciers, and the bewitching scenery of the remote and uninhabited mountain valleys, almost entirely took away that interest in human affairs, which, generally speaking, absorbs by far the largest share of every one's attention in a new country. We longed to be up and doing; and even the time spent in visiting the Salève which overhangs Geneva, and which in any other part of the world would be deemed a magnificent object,—or bathing in the Rhone,—or rowing on the lake to catch longer and better views of the sunset gleams on the tops of the snow-ridges,—only added to the mountain fever in our souls. We were, moreover, haunted by fears that something might occur to prevent our excursion to the Alps—some sickness on our own part—the news of some dying friend requiring us at home—some call of professional duty;—in short, we became so impatient to be off,

that though we left fifty things unseen at Geneva, we shook all other considerations from us, gave directions that our letters should not be sent to bore and distract us when cruising amongst the mountains, but be forwarded to Milan, and there lie till called for. Then, in one of the most joyous moments of our lives, we set out in quest of adventures at early dawn, in the cheerful month of August, along the road constructed by Buona-parte, on the south shore of that prince of lakes—the Lake of Geneva.

CHAPTER II.

THE LACUSTRINE DELTA OF THE RHONE.

THE sun—hard-working fellow as he is—having made the nether circuit of the globe, began once more to fling before him the gigantic shadows of the Alps across the highest glaciers ; but every light and every shade being just the opposite of what it had been the evening before, the landscape seemed longer the same ; and as every fresh league brought new and loftier ridges and valleys into view, the grace and deeper interest of novelty were perpetually adding their charms to our journey. The sultry, fatiguing air of the preceding day had been exchanged for a nipping breeze of the freshest kind of coolness—still it was not too cool, for it breathed lightly past, animating everything it touched. The dew still hung heavy and thick on the natural forests of sweet-chesnuts which grew on our right hand, on the steep grassy banks, along a district backed by hills so lofty and abrupt, that only the mid-day sun ever visits the level road skirting the southern margin of the lake.

Presently, on reaching the extreme eastern end of the Lake of Geneva, we rounded the corner, and turning sharp to our right, entered the famous valley or magnificent rent in the hills, which no doubt has given its name to that picturesque district of Switzerland known by the name of the Canton of the Valais. My attention, however, was more taken up with the grand geological operations going on at the upper end of the lake, than with the beauty of the scenery encircling it on every side, all which I turned over to the raptures of my sketching companions.

Every one knows, that there occurs at the mouth of all rivers, great as well as small, an accumulation of materials brought down from the higher grounds, either by the ordinary operation of the stream, or by the more energetic though transient agency of floods. These accumulations, which are called Deltas, not only extend themselves into the sea, but, by reason of successive deposits, gradually reach the surface, and eventually become covered with vegetation; after which, the action of floods, high tides, and tempests, by flinging up and scattering the materials, raises them to a small height indeed above the level of the ocean, but to a prodigious extent to the right and left, so as to form such countries as Bengal, Egypt, Venetian Lombardy Louisiana, and Buenos Ayres. These huge

deltas are, in fact, half-drowned continents, liable to inundation upon the smallest rise of the waters beyond their average level. It requires, however, an eye long trained in such researches to take in at a glance the slow and widely-extended proceedings of such enormous accumulations as those just alluded to. Even the mind of a practised observer is apt to get giddy as it traces back these operations, over an area of a thousand miles square, and rashly ventures to compute the lapse of ages which *must* have been employed in the construction of territories so vast, by the agency of increments scarcely perceptible, and which, were they not demonstrably the cause of what we see, would appear to our cramped understanding quite inadequate to such effects.

But the case is most agreeably simplified and brought within the range of our capacity and popular belief, when we address ourselves to the examination of such a small, or comparatively small, delta as that of the Rhone, now in the process of formation at the upper end of the Lake of Geneva; and I strongly advise every traveller who wishes to learn the secrets of one of the most interesting branches of geology to pause a few moments in his journey at this spot. A day, or half a day, or even an hour or two, spent in looking down from the adjacent rising grounds, and in passing from side to side of the valley just

above the point where the lake ends, and the flat alluvial bottom, or *strath*, as it is called in Scotland, commences, will not only be well bestowed as a matter of pleasure, but do more to give a definite and intelligible purpose to geological inquiry than the perusal of many volumes.

The Rhone at this part of its course is highly turbid, and at certain seasons of the year, when swollen by floods and accelerated in its course, bears along with it materials of considerable magnitude. At all times and seasons, indeed, it carries with it, farther or nearer into the bosom of the lake, the ruins of a hundred hills, and quietly deposits them on the bottom, at distances varying inversely as the magnitude of the particles forming the sediment. The larger ones, such as blocks of stone, and fragments of shingle, after rubbing and grinding against one another over many a turbulent league of the steep bed of the river, at length find a resting-place near the upper edge of the delta. Then follow pebbles and coarse gravel, which are borne somewhat farther into the lake; next fine gravel,—sand still further,—while mud is carried further still; the dividing line between each pair of these deposits being sometimes quite indistinct, though at other times it is very clearly marked. These and some other features in the formation of a delta depend upon the volume as

well as speed of the river, the inclination of the ground forming its bed or channel, the peculiar nature of the soil brought down, the height of the circumjacent mountains, the latitude of the district, and various other circumstances modifying the climate. After the stones, gravel, sand, and the coarser sorts of mud have been successively deposited at the bottom of the lake, a whitish, milky-looking, set of clouds may be observed to extend for a considerable distance beyond the outer edge of the delta. These clouds roll about independently for a time, in the eddies caused by the influx of so great a stream, as if unwilling to mingle with the pure waters of the lake. In point of fact, they do not mix, for the particles which form the subaqueous clouds alluded to are merely very finely powdered limestone, granite, schistus, and other rocky materials, are all heavier than water, and have quite as decided a tendency to reach the bottom as the larger masses have. Owing, however, to their extreme minuteness, their weight becomes disproportionately small compared to the resistance which their surfaces offer to the fluid in which they seem to be floating; and thus, though they are all the time sinking, and must eventually reach the bottom, their downward motion is imperceptible to the eye.

If you take a boat, which I strongly recommend, and not only skirt along the outer edge

of the delta, and cross it in various directions, but row off to some distance, you will perceive the gradual diminution of the turbidness in the supply of water coming from the Rhone, till at last you will scarcely be able to perceive any impurity in it at all. If, when you reach that point, viz. the extreme outer edge of the delta, you sink a lead to the bottom, prepared with a little grease (or *arming*, as we call it at sea), you will fish up some mud, which, though abundantly visible, will be almost if not totally impalpable or insensible to your touch when rubbed between the finger and thumb. If now you begin at that point, and steer directly for the mouth of the river, you will find at each cast of the lead not only a diminished depth, but you will also observe an increased size in the particles forming the floor of the lake, till at last the bow of your boat will rattle amongst the shingle, or grate along a bed of gravel. You will now be in front of a natural plantation of willows, alders, canes, and other thirsty, deep-drinking plants, which, both by their growth and by their decay, co-operate with the stream in producing dry land over districts where, but a few years before, geologically speaking, the lake may have measured many fathoms in depth. If you now row to the other or south-western end of the lake, you will find the Rhone, which entered

as thick as pea-soup, running out through the middle of the city of Geneva, as clear as the deep blue sea itself, all its contaminating materials having been long ago deposited at the bottom.

I have now been describing what is done by the Rhone, which is the principal filler-up of the lake; but besides that immense river, there are hundreds of minor streams, all gushing into this great reservoir, each and all bringing with it a cargo of washings from the Alps, greater or smaller in quantity according to the length and size of the streams, or the steepness of their channels,—elements which also determine, in some measure, the degree of fineness of the materials brought down. Every such stream, it must be recollected, has its delta, thrusting its forehead into the lake, and contributing its share, slowly but surely, to the filling-up process, of which I shall speak more presently.

If we pursue our researches higher up the valley of the Rhone, that is, above the lake, we shall find many extensive ranges of perfectly horizontal alluvial ground, now thickly covered with vegetation, which had evidently, in old times, been the basins of lakes into which the very same Rhone must have flowed, and gradually filled up from end to end, by slowly protruding its delta or deltas into each of these lakes in suc-

cession, precisely as the great delta above described is now filling up the Lake of Geneva. In those remote days, the deposit of materials in the present lake was probably very insignificant compared to what it now is, since the grand cargo of materials brought down from the hills was arrested by some one or other of the intervening lakes (now alluvial plains), which then acted the part of sess-pools, higher up the valley. So, in future times—(the distance of which from our epoch is perhaps not utterly beyond the reach of a bold geologist's computation)—the inhabitants of Geneva will see a magnificent plain where they now behold a magnificent lake; while the great Mediterranean delta, will then receive the whole burthen of materials brought down by that great stream and all its tributaries, the greater portion of which is now arrested by the Lake of Geneva, and must be so till it is entirely filled up. This process must go on until all the inequalities are worn away, and the mighty Alps themselves are reduced either to level plains, or degraded into gently-sloping banks. Such scenes will bear no resemblance to what we see now; for when the snow-topped mountains and their attendant glaciers—the sources of the stream—are gone, the Rhone will have dwindled into a petty rivulet, and the grassy or wooded ground stripped of its snows,

and basking in a more genial, perhaps a torrid climate, will afford few materials for removal. In all this there is scarcely anything theoretical, strictly so called. It is the inevitable and almost directly calculable effect of existing causes—the legitimate deduction from observed facts. ‘Thus runs the world away!’

And truly, it is difficult in passing along the countries of which I am speaking, if we will but use our eyes at all, not to be forced to confess the irresistible and abundantly sufficient power of the agencies in daily operation to explain the dissolution which everything on the earth is undergoing. This progress may indeed be called slow in comparison to the quick march of our petty span of life; but the wear-and-tear of the mountains, and their final extinction, is no less a matter of physical fact than our own mortality is. It cannot, indeed, be denied that the Alps and Andes are longer-lived than we; but even their age,—that of the hoariest-headed peak amongst them, Mont Blanc or Chimborazzo, or the blushing Monte Rosa,—is really but an instant of time—a mere fraction—an infinitesimal moment—a single beat of the great clock of time, to say nothing of eternity! It is just the same when we come to speak of distances, since our longest stretch on earth,—from “China to Peru,” from “Indus to the Pole,”—or even

our longest measurable spaces in the heavens, the aphelion of our most eccentric comet lying millions of millions of miles beyond the orbit of Uranus,—what are they but insignificant portions of space, mere hairbreadths in the vast scale of even the visible or conceivable parts of astronomy?

To some minds these speculations, or, to speak more properly, these absolute certainties, are sources of pain and bewilderment rather than of pleasure. But it appears to me that, if well conducted, they are adapted to do good, by rendering us more contented with our lot, and more earnest in the performance of our duty, by filling our lives with more lofty and more cheerful objects of pursuit. It is surely a delightful reflection, and one filled with the brightest hopes, that insignificant as we are, we are still capable of seeing and understanding so much of all these things; and that we are permitted to reason upon them to a great extent, though we can see neither their beginning nor their end, nor can we interrogate their purpose. When rightly employed, such speculations give, if anything on earth can, a foretaste of immortality, and tell, both to the reason and to the imagination, that the soul is not perishable;—and thus, all such pursuits as geology and astronomy, properly carried on, do essentially contribute to fortify our faith in Revelation, by inculcating, or,

as it were, enforcing the grand doctrine of dependence, and making us feel, at every turn, how powerless we are, and how powerful is our Maker, and yet how beneficent, and, above all, how uniform and how admirably consistent, in all his operations !

CHAPTER III.

AN ALPINE DEBACLE.

IN speaking of the formation of the Delta of the Rhone, where it falls into the Lake of Geneva, I have adverted only to the gradual, and comparatively slow, operation of that diurnal wear and tear of the earth, and silent accumulation of materials, which, in time, will certainly fill up the lake from end to end. But besides this slow process, perceptible only to the eye of science, there occur from time to time catastrophes which, while they add very considerably and palpably to the size of the delta, do so obviously at the expense of those valleys which serve as channels to the various streams which at once supply the lake with water and the delta with materials of accumulation.

Of these catastrophes, the most frequent, as well as the most destructive in its operation, is called a Debacle, which is merely a gigantic flood, or sudden rush of water, caused by the disruption of the retaining bank or barrier of a temporary lake

in the upper part of a mountain valley. If such a lake be of considerable magnitude, and the valley be narrow, and steep in its bed, it is easy to conceive the mischief likely to arise from letting loose such a body of water all at once. On the first visit I paid to the Alps, I had the good fortune to arrive at Martigny just fifty days after an incident of this kind had occurred, and while the effects were not only abundantly conspicuous, but all the details so fresh in the recollection of the wretched half-swamped inhabitants, there was no difficulty in picking up from eye-witnesses many curious particulars of the disaster.

There is a severe simplicity, as the artists call it, about the proximate causes of these grand and calamitous operations of nature which renders them easy of description, for they are generally quite obvious. But the same circumstance makes it very difficult to describe the consequences, which are not only wide-spread, but are varied in a thousand shapes, and must be seen together to produce the terrific effect which, like that of a severe earthquake, haunts for ever afterwards the memory of those persons who have been exposed to its action on the spot. Certain I am that I shall never forget the scene of desolation caused by the great debacle at Martigny. More than two-and-twenty

years have elapsed since I looked over the melancholy waste—and though I have become tolerably familiar with the operation of seas and floods in other regions in the interval, I must own that it was only in an Alpine valley that I ever witnessed the full power of moving water, and thence learned duly to respect it as an agent in the geological history of the earth's surface. A few words will serve to explain the cause of the debacle in question, and will serve as an introduction to what we ourselves saw.

The Val de Bagnes is a steep, narrow, rugged, valley, or more properly rocky glen, running for about thirty or forty miles in a direction nearly east and west among those mountains lying on the south side of the Valais, and forming a part of the great Alpine ridge which divides Switzerland from Piedmont. This ridge is elevated to that height which secures for it a coating of eternal snow, and consequently it sends down on all sides, wherever the slope and form of the ground are suitable, those well-known huge frozen masses called glaciers, composed, as I shall have occasion afterwards to describe more particularly, of pure snow at the top, but of ice and half-melted snow at the bottom. Near a place called St. Branchier the Val de Bagnes takes a rectangular turn, and after passing in its new course for two or

three miles amongst the hills, opens into the great valley of the Rhone at Martigny. The river Dranse, which has its origin in the two glaciers of Chermontane and Mont Durand, lying at the very top of the glen, flows along the Val de Bagnes till at Martigny it meets the Rhone, of which it is one of the principal feeders. The banks of this river, or, to speak more properly, of this mountain torrent, are at most places precipitous. But the ground occasionally becoming less steep, admits of the formation of soil, and this even if it be too steep for the purposes of agriculture is richly clad with the larch, a tree which loves to root itself in such commanding positions. If, then, by any possibility, the industrious and hardy Switzer can either plough up, or delve into such a spot, he eagerly takes possession of it, and presently converts it into a garden, in the midst of which he builds up of dark red logs of larch one of those charming cottages, so well known all over the world for their picturesque beauty, and which, unlike so many other edifices, loses no portion of its interest on a closer inspection. Indeed I am sure every Alpine traveller will agree with me, that they are often a hundred times prettier in the reality, than in those tawdry paintings when the artist strives in vain to impart to his would-be Swiss cottages the inimitable graces—the boundless

and ever fresh variety of Alpine scenery. To connect these eagle-nest patches together, bridges are thrown across the ravine ; and to supply them with bread, mills are constructed as near the edge of the stream as the experience of ordinary floods has taught the inhabitants that they may venture to place their wheels. Thus, wherever it is possible, amongst the Alps, for the foot of man to plant itself, little villages start up, enriched by gardens, and decked by the church steeple, which never fails to meet the eye in a Swiss community, however small, or however poor, or, I may add, however exposed it may occasionally be to the ravages of such a debacle as swept out the poor valley of the Dranse in 1818.

Until the fatal moment of destruction arrives, or at all events, till the hour of danger approaches, mankind, all the world over, are pretty nearly equally indifferent, and go on, dancing and singing, marrying and giving in marriage, under the very ribs of death, with as much unconcern as if they were living in perfect safety ! The inhabitants of Portici and Resina, for instance, living at the base of Vesuvius ; or those of Catania, at the foot of Mount Etna, where torrent upon torrent of lava has flowed in endless succession,—never dream of an eruption till the parched volcano drinks up their wells, and, in the language of Scripture,

“fire runs along the ground ! *” In like manner I have observed the gay voluptuaries of Lima scarcely disturbed in their reckless enjoyment of life by the shock of an earthquake, which interrupted only for a transient moment of fear, and impatient prayer, their darling “Tertullas,” while the ceilings and walls of their houses cracked in their ears, and church steeples toppled round them ! So with ourselves—the coasts of our own country, strewed every winter with wrecks, suggest no ideas of danger to the British seaman, or make him one whit less anxious to leave the wearisome land for the merry sea. Precisely in the same spirit of confident and happy security an inhabitant of the Val de Bagnes prefers living amongst his cold and almost barren, but much-loved, mountains, in a situation of constant danger with which he has become familiar from his infancy, rather than dwell in perfect security in the rich adjacent plains of Lombardy.

Not far from the top of the Val de Bagnes the huge glacier of Getroz, descending between two mountains (Mont Pleureur and Mont Getroz), falls into the valley at a place where the channel of the Dranse is much contracted. For several years previous to the time I am speaking of (1818) the Dranse had been occasionally, but not seriously,

* Exodus ix. v. 24.

obstructed by blocks of ice and avalanches of snow from the slowly-advancing glacier above mentioned. These, in process of time, became so frequent and so extensive, that they began to resist the melting power of the summer; and eventually the glacier itself, having joined company with the enormous pile of fragments it had sent before it, pushed itself directly across the narrow valley, so as to rest its snout or base on the foot of the opposite mountain, called Mauvoisin, on the left bank of the Dranse, while its upper part lay several hundred feet above the bed of the stream, on the other side. For some time the torrent contrived, as is usual in such cases, to find its way under or through the crevices in this barrier: but at length, owing to fresh portions of mingled ice-rocks and snow being cast down from the sides of the glacier, the various channels or tunnels which the river had excavated, became choked up. As soon as this took place, the waters, having no outlet, of course began to form a lake, which in time swelled to half a league in length, and though only three or four hundred feet wide, measured more than a hundred feet deep.

This was the state of affairs in April 1818, and there would have been no harm in it had the barrier been of rocky materials, as frequently happens in the Alpine valleys; in that case as soon as the lake, by

the gradual supply of the Dranse, had risen to the top it would have flowed over the edge, and merely added one to the multitude of beautiful cascades which characterise the scenery of that country. As it was, the danger became greater and greater every moment; and the experienced Swiss, now fully awakened to their danger, saw that unless they adopted some very prompt and energetic measures, the weight of the accumulated waters would, ere long, become too great for the strength of the dam of ice, and the whole reservoir would be dashed at once down the ravine, to the destruction of all the villages, fields, bridges, and mills, which I have already described as lining the banks of the stream, and which, though built above its ordinary level, it was too obvious must come within the limits of the threatened debacle.

An able engineer, of the name of Venetz, who lived in the Valais, not far from Martigny, at once perceived that although the evil might not, perhaps, be entirely averted, it might be essentially lessened. He saw clearly that it was impossible to diminish the present magnitude of the lake formed by the glacier of Getroz, but he thought it might be prevented from rising above a certain level, if a gallery, or tunnel, could be cut through the barrier of ice at such a height *above the level of the lake* as would enable the work to be finished before the

water should rise to that point. This required not only a very nice calculation, but a degree of vigour and activity in the execution which it might be difficult to match in any other country. The drift or gallery which M. Venetz proposed to bore through the glacier, for the purpose of acting as a waste weir to the lake, was made to slope downwards, in such a way that when the water rose to its upper end it should flow so rapidly through that it might act like a saw, and by cutting down the ice of the glacier, permit the lake gradually to descend, till it was nearly emptied, and the mass of water be prevented from becoming an overmatch for the retaining wall of ice and snow, as it was certain to prove, sooner or later, if things were left alone.

“This ingenious and bold scheme,” to use the words of M. Escher de la Linth, “was begun on the 10th of May and finished on the 13th of June, under the direction of M. Venetz. The gallery was sixty-eight feet long, and during its formation the workmen were exposed to the constant risk of being crushed to pieces by the falling blocks of ice, or buried under the glacier itself.*” In the mean time the surface of the lake had risen sixty-two feet, but as it had not yet reached the upper orifice of the gallery, M. Venetz, with the same decisive spirit which marked all his proceedings on

* Edinburgh Phil. Journal, vol. i. page 189.

this critical occasion, having secured the main point, viz., a thorough opening across the barrier, set to work to cut down the floor of his gallery till it met the rising waters, which, glad of so free an outlet, flowed rapidly along the passage which the engineer had cut through the heart of the glacier. The lake at this juncture (13th June) was upwards of two miles in length, but not quite one-twelfth of a mile in width,—strictly, 400 feet upon an average; the depth, however, compensated for its small breadth, being 200 feet. The floor of the gallery, as had been anticipated, went on wearing away, so fast that by the next day the lake had diminished in depth one foot; and this evidence of the power of the engineer over the enemy which threatened to swallow them all up, spread some rays of hope amongst the terrified inhabitants of the unhappy valley. On the following day the lake had subsided ten feet, and on the 16th of June, or only three days after the sapping process had commenced working, the diminution in the height of the surface was forty-five feet. The rest of the story cannot be better told than in the words of M. Escher, the truth of all the particulars of which I had opportunities of verifying on the spot.

“As soon as the water flowed from the lower end of the gallery the velocity of the cascade

melted the ice, and thus wore away the gallery at its mouth. The water which had penetrated the crevices of the glacier caused enormous fragments of ice to fall from the lower sides of it, so that owing to these causes the body of the glacier, which formed the retaining wall of the lake, was so much diminished in thickness that the floor of the gallery was reduced from its original length of 600 to 8 feet. As soon as the cascade had cut through the cone of ice, it attacked the debris of the base of Mauvoisin, upon which the cone rested; that is to say, the torrent undermined the glacier by washing away the loose materials forming the bed of the stream, on which this mass of ice had been piled up; and having carried it off by degrees, it became able to push the soft soil from the foot of Mont Mauvoisin, and excavate for itself a passage between the glacier and the rocky beds which compose the mountain. As soon as this happened, the water rushed out,—the ice gave way with a tremendous crash,—the lake was emptied in half-an-hour,—and the sea of water which it contained precipitated itself into the valley with a rapidity and violence which it is impossible to describe. The fury of this raging flood was first stayed by the narrow gorge below the glacier formed between Mont Pleureur and a projecting breast of Mont Mauvoisin: here it was engulfed

with such force that it carried away the bridge of Mauvoisin, ninety feet above the Dranse, and even rose several fathoms above the advanced mass of the mountain. From this narrow gorge, the flood spread itself over a wider part of the valley, which again contracted into another gorge; and in this way, passing from one basin to another, it acquired new violence, and carried along with it forests, rocks, houses, barns, and cultivated land. When it reached Le Chable, one of the principal villages of the valley, the flood, which seemed to contain more debris than water, was pent up between the piers of a solid bridge nearly fifty feet above the Dranse, and began to attack the inclined plane upon which the church and the chief part of the village is built. An additional rise of a few feet would have instantly undermined the village; but at this critical moment the bridge gave way, and carried off with it the houses at its two extremities. The flood now spread itself over the wide part of the valley between Le Chable and St. Branchier, undermining, destroying, and hurrying away the houses, the roads, the richest crops, and the finest trees, loaded with fruit. Instead of being encumbered with these spoils, the moving chaos received from them new force; and when it entered the narrow valley extending from St. Branchier to Martigny, it continued its work of destruction till

its fury became weakened by expanding itself over the great plain formed by the valley of the Rhone. After ravaging Le Bourg and the village of Martigny, it fell with comparative tranquillity into the Rhone, leaving behind it, on the plains of Martigny, the wreck of houses and of furniture, thousands of trees torn up by the roots, and the bodies of men and of animals whom it had swept away*."

I arrived at Martigny, as I have already mentioned, on the 5th of August, just seven weeks after the catastrophe above described. Many of the houses had been swept away, and all the remaining habitations gave token of having been invaded by the flood which, even at the lower extremity of the town, where the valley is widest, had risen to the height of ten feet, as we could remark by the traces left on the walls. Higher up the torrent had been much deeper; and the inhabitants pointed out to us the manner in which a considerable district of houses had been saved from destruction by the intervention of the village church, a compact stone building placed—perhaps not accidentally—with one of its corners directed towards the adjacent gorge, out of which the overcharged torrent of the Dranse burst with such violence on the 16th of June. Had the side or end of the church faced the stream, it is supposed

* Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, vol. i. page 189.

that not only it must have given way, but, in its train, all that quarter of the village would have been overwhelmed. The strong nature of the angle of the church, however, seems to have divided the waters; and as the valley at this point begins to spread itself out, the stream readily obeyed the new direction given to it, and flowed to the right and left. With some difficulty we made our way into the church, which was nearly half full of sand, mud, and stones, brought there by the flood. The pulpit just peeped above the mass of rubbish, but the altar was no longer visible, being quite buried under the mud. This very substantial building, indeed, had acted its part so firmly in the hour of need, that the old man who acted as our guide patted the wall familiarly with his hand, saying "The church was, and is, after all, our chief reliance in the hour of danger!" something figurative, perhaps, mingling with the poetical sentiment.

All the hedges, garden-walls, and other boundary lines and land-marks of every description, were of course obliterated, under one uniform mass of detritus which had levelled all distinctions in a truly sweeping and democratic confusion. In every house, without exception, there lay a stratum of alluvial matter several feet in thickness, so deposited that passages were obliged to be cut through it, along the streets, as we see roads cut in the snow

after a storm. On that side of every building which faced up the valley, and consequently against which the stream was directed, there had been collected a pile of large stones under all, then a layer of trees, with their tattered branches lying one way, and their roots the other. Next came a net-work of timber-beams of houses, broken doors, fragments of mill-wheels, shafts of carts, handles of ploughs, and all the wreck and ruin of the numerous villages which the debacle had first torn to pieces, and then swept down the valley in one undistinguishable mass. The lower part of the bark had been completely stripped off all the trees still standing, each one being charged on the side next the torrent with a singular accumulation of rubbish, consisting chiefly of uprooted trees, and those wooden portions of the buildings which were bolted together. I ought to mention, also, that from every house, and behind every tree, circumstanced as I have described, there extended down the valley a long tail or train of diluvial rubbish, deposited in the swirl, or, as a sailor would say, in the eddy, under the lee of these obstacles. All over the plain, large boulders or erratic blocks lay thickly strewn. These varied in size from a yard to a couple of yards in diameter ; but just at the point where the ravine of the Dranse leaves the mountains, and joins the open valley of Mar-

tigny, I examined some enormously large masses of granite, which the inhabitants assured me had been brought down and placed there by the sheer force of the debacle.

No one, till he sees it, can form any just conception, what the power of moving water is, especially when confined between two precipitous banks, accumulated to the height of fifty or sixty feet, and flowing along a bed of such steepness, that even in ordinary states of supply the stream acquires the character of a foaming torrent. M. Escher, as I gather from one of his expressions, seems to consider that the debacle, instead of being encumbered by the spoils it had stripped from the sides of the valley through which it had passed, was, on the contrary, augmented in violence thereby. I am not quite sure whether this be sound geological doctrine or not, but I well remember, even at the distance of twenty-two years, the awe and wonder with which I looked at one of the masses of rock pointed out to me, which the stream in question had evidently projected fairly out of the gorge into the plain. It measured twenty-seven paces round, twelve feet in height, and twelve feet across in one direction, which I fixed upon as about the average. It was of a rude pyramidical shape. Further up the glen, I came to many rocks, which, though much larger than the one I mentioned, bore indubitable

marks of having been in motion. This, however wonderful, seemed at first less difficult to imagine than it was to account for a number of comparatively small boulders scattered over the plain, lying amongst the houses, far from the gorge of the Dranse, and such as were manifestly too heavy for the unassisted torrent, huge as it was, to have driven along. Besides, some of these rested either on the top of the deposits of sand and mud, or not far from their tops. It is probable, I think, that these masses may have been borne on the surface of masses of ice, or, more probably, included in them, and thus might float along till the diminished depth of the flood, caused by its spreading out, caused them to take the ground. On the melting of the ice, the stones resting upon, or imbedded in them, would naturally rest on the surface*.

Leaving, now, the field of mere narration of facts, I can find no adequate terms in which to describe the sort of hopeless feeling which filled our minds, as we viewed the total, and, as it seemed, irremediable nature of the misfortune which had befallen the inhabitants of Martigny. We said to ourselves,

* See this subject treated of at length, and brought to bear on the transportation of all the erratic blocks in various parts of the world, in Lyell's *Geology*, 5th Edition, Vol. I. p. 269 ; Vol. II. p. 289 ; Vol. IV. p. 46 & 48. See also Mr. Darwin's *Journal*, forming Vol. III. of the *Voyages of the Beagle and Adventure*, Chapter XIII.

that no time could ever restore their town to prosperity, or re-clothe their fields with verdure. Yet, only fifteen years afterwards, when I again visited this scene of utter, and, as it seemed, hopeless desolation, I could scarcely, by any effort of the imagination recall the spot to my mind, or be persuaded that it really was the same ground I had seen laid waste. I knew very well, because I found it so set down in memorandums made on the spot, that a huge debacle, or mountain torrent, had burst over the hapless village, swept away all its herds and flocks, utterly destroyed its gardens and fields, drowned not a few of the inhabitants, and caused infinite distress; and I well remembered thinking it almost impossible that any length of time could effectually remove the traces of this gigantic misfortune. In spite of this prophecy, the only circumstance which I could now discover to mark the event of which I supposed the visible effects were to exist for ages, consisted in a black line painted on the wall of one of the hotels, at the height of ten feet from the ground, to point out to travellers that such was the limit to which the inundation had reached! The fields were all again matted thickly with verdure; the hedges and dividing walls appeared never to have been disturbed; flower-gardens, and kitchen-gardens, and grass plots smiled on every side of the happy valley; apple-trees laden with fruit, and

rows of tall poplars, marked out many lines of new and better roads than before, leading from new bridges which formerly had no existence! On examining matters more closely, I discovered one, and only one, remarkable trace of the debacle. All the old trees remained still stripped of their bark on the side which had faced the stream; and though a new coating had gradually formed itself, the rough handling of the torrent was still deeply marked on the trunks of all the trees which had been alive at that period, and had possessed strength enough to resist the flood. In one of the gardens, also, I came upon an erratic block or boulder of granite, so nearly hid in a mass of flowers and foliage, that I could not for some time recognise it as one of my old friends of the Dranse flood. So many young trees had been planted, and so many new houses built, and such had been the regeneration of the cornfields, vineyards, and orchards, that it required the retrospective, theoretical, optics of a geologist to discover any symptoms of diluvian action at all. Indeed, I much question whether even a practised geologist, unless put upon his guard and his curiosity roused, would now be able to infer from the existing appearances, that such a catastrophe had occurred; and we certainly might defy him to affix a date thereto. Even I, who can almost say that I witnessed the catastrophe, and took a careful survey of

the attendant circumstances when they were all fresh and obvious, could scarcely help fancying that the account I had myself recorded, and which I carried in my hand, must have been exaggerated, though written in good faith, and, if anything, short of the reality.

When we consider how effectually the lapse of a very few years has thus destroyed all the palpable evidences of a phenomenon, which, though on a small scale, was of a most decided character,—we ought to recollect under what disadvantages a geologist must often come to the investigation of those still more extensive and infinitely more varied revolutions in the earth's surface, which form the ordinary topics of inquiry in this interesting branch of philosophical inquiry.

In the first place, enormous periods of time may have elapsed since the spot about which he is speculating may have been convulsed by its last earthquake, or since it was overwhelmed by its last debacle. In the next, it may well be asked, how can he hope to make due allowance for those countless antecedent convulsions or catastrophes which may either have rent the interior of the ground, or modified its surface preparatory to the last arrangement which he is seeking to account for, and without some knowledge of which it is very difficult to draw any safe conclusion?

These difficulties, however, only show the importance of extending and varying our researches, and above all, of trying to observe with our own eyes the phenomena of existing cause, and learning what nature is actually doing—and thence inferring, by the only legitimate course of geological induction, what she has done in the countless ages of times past.

CHAPTER IV.

THE JARDIN.

QUICKENED in our curiosity by the animating though distressing scenes we had witnessed at Martigny, and cheered by the brilliancy of a hot day early in August, we set out from that place over the pass called the Tête Noire, for Chamouny, our intention being to make the complete tour of Mont Blanc from Martigny as a starting point, and then, after returning to that place, to proceed to Italy by the way of the Valais and the celebrated pass of the Simplon.

Although nothing very particular occurred during the first morning of our grand circumbendibus, nor indeed on any of the eight arduous days which this expedition cost us, it may be said with truth, that scarcely a single hour of the whole period was passed without some novel and exciting cause of interest. I therefore venture strongly to recommend to any one who really wishes to see the beauties and wonders of the Alps, not to omit

making this grand tour, for I have found in every country, that the only satisfactory method of seeing a great mountain, is fairly to go round its base, and then, if it be possible, and not too laborious or too expensive, or needlessly fraught with profitless danger, to go to its very top. I shall have occasion, by-and-by, to illustrate this rule, by describing the best manner of visiting Mount Etna. In the mean time, it may be laid down as a good rule when roving amongst the Alps, and not a bad one anywhere, to avoid doing out-of-the-way things, merely because they are odd or difficult of accomplishment, but lead to nothing useful. To perform feats, merely for the pleasure of saying we have performed them, is surely a very petty vanity, yet it was one into which, I must confess, I was nearly falling on arriving at Chamouny. In the hotel where our party put up, after having walked over the Tête Noire, a distance of nearly thirty miles, we stumbled upon a Polish Count who had just returned from an expedition to the summit of Mont Blanc. The account he gave us of his adventures, and those of his son, a boy of only fourteen, and the animated assurances of the guides, who were looking out for a fresh job, that, with a little patience, a good deal of resolution, a moderate degree of strength, and adequate faith in their knowledge, nothing was safer or surer than

such a trip, had well-nigh tempted us to embark in a similar undertaking. To tell the truth, I have often since been half inclined to regret that we gave up the notion, which at first seized us very strongly; for, in spite of all that might be said of the idle nature of such a hard scramble, without philosophical instruments, or indeed any means of profiting in a scientific manner by the opportunities which such an elevation affords, I cannot but feel that there would have been ample pleasure, to compensate for the trouble, and a certain kind of profit, too, in the mere fact of standing, were it but for a minute, on the tip-top of the highest mountain in Europe.

It may not be out of place to mention here what has often occurred to me since I first visited the Alps, and enjoyed opportunities of comparing them with some of the loftiest and most celebrated ranges of mountains in other parts of the world. It is true there are vastly higher peaks, both in India and in America, and even occasionally whole districts in which continuous ridges of higher elevation occur than the Alps can boast of. But it must be recollected, that mere height above the general surface of the earth, though a grand feature, is not the only circumstance which gives interest to a mountainous country. And I may frankly state, for the satisfaction of those whose travels are limited to

Europe, that, in everything constituting either that striking interest which merely astonishes at the moment, or that which comes so strongly home both to the reason and the imagination, as to endure for ever in the memory, the Alps bear away the palm from every other.

This arises, no doubt, from the superior capabilities which they possess for exhibiting, not only grandeur and beauty of scenery, in almost endless variety, but for displaying in an available shape a multitude of objects of scientific as well as popular curiosity, in every part of their range. It may be said in answer, that other ranges, such as the Andes and Himalayas, include in their enormous extent as many scenes of wonder and of beauty as the Alps possess. This may be quite true, and yet the Alps maintain the chief station, in the catalogue, when all the circumstances are taken into account.

In the first place, which is an immense advantage, the Alps are, out of all comparison, more easily got at—and when got at, they are much more easily and more pleasantly examined. The mere apparatus of guides, convenient roads, and good fare, with the other advantages which spring from previous research, add vastly to the genuine interest of mountain travelling. All the best routes are known: all the objects which are essentially the most interesting pointed out; and the best

times and seasons for visiting them agreeably, have been well settled. Let no one imagine that the absence of these things contributes at all to the satisfaction of rambling amongst lofty mountain-ridges,—or that a protracted series of difficulties, dangers, and privations, does not materially diminish, and often completely destroy, the pleasure which we are sure to find when enjoying the long, established comforts of Switzerland. For the rest, there will always be found, even in the most frequented parts of the Alps, abundant opportunities for the most hardy exertion, and quite enough of privation and sources of enterprise to try the fortitude and spirit of the most adventurous, and to gratify the taste of the greatest lover of roughing. In the Andes, one is constantly obliged either to relinquish entirely many objects of the highest interest, or to incur the greatest hazard in getting at them,—while the numerous discomforts to which we are exposed at every step, often annihilate all satisfaction in the research. The time, no doubt, may come, when the Andes and Himalayas will be as easily visited, and as conveniently examined, as the Alps; but, in the meanwhile, I hope the testimony of experience may prove satisfactory to those who cannot go far from home, by showing, that the Alps have very greatly the advantage, in every genuine quality of pleasurable or profitable inquiry,

over other mountainous districts in any part of the globe.

Most of the peculiarities of the Alps have been so abundantly and so frequently described, that scarcely anything quite new can now present itself even to the least experienced; and yet it will often happen to those who have seen most of the world, that circumstances will occur of which no previous description has given any warning. In the same way, situations of the highest interest fall in the beaten track of every one who has his eyes about him in those enchanting regions, where a perpetual freshness, if not a perpetual verdure, is found. My joy, at least, was unbounded on finding myself at last fairly among mountains of the first order. The evening was grand; and I shall never forget the feelings with which I sat down, exhausted by the day's exertions, at the very foot of Mont Blanc, and watched the effect, of which I had heard a hundred accounts, of the setting sunlight on the highest peak. Long after the valley of Chamouny was cast into deep shade, the towering shoulders of Mont Blanc, and still more the numerous spire-like peaks or needles of granite, retained a bright light far up in the sky. This in due season was followed by the well-sung beauties of the "rose-tints, which summer's twilight leaves upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow."

The most remarkable change, however, which takes place in the colour of the snow on the higher ridges of the Alps after sunset has not, I think, been either poetised, or ever been described in prose,—and as it was quite new to me, may possibly be so to others. While the eye is feasting on the rich tints which succeed to the bright light of day, and wishes they might last for ever, the rose colour gradually dies away, and its place is taken by a livid, dead white, resembling so fearfully that of a corpse, that I felt quite shocked as well as startled by the change,—nor have I ever met with any one whose nerves were not more or less disturbed by this painful transition from the blush of health, as it were, to the paleness of death ! I have seen very wild deserts in Peru and elsewhere, and many other scenes of desolation in the world, but none which has struck me with so deep a feeling of melancholy, as the sight of Mont Blanc during the period, fortunately a brief one, in which this livid hue is spread over it. Before the shades of night finally settle over all, a very slight and scarcely perceptible return of the rose-tint is often visible on the snow, a sort of reanimation of the scene, which is most cheering and consolatory.

Next morning we climbed the easy ascent of Montanvert, in two hours and a half, which position, it was thought by some, commanded a view

of the whole *mer-de-glace*. I was neither of this opinion, however, nor satisfied with a simple walk of a hundred yards upon the surface of the frozen sea. But my companions said they had had enough of it, and resolved rather to address themselves to one of the adjacent mountains—I forget its name. Still, as I had no great fancy for undertaking so arduous a task alone, or accompanied only by a single guide, I was delighted to catch a party consisting of two Frenchmen and one German, just setting off for the *Jardin*, as it is called—a remote and seldom visited spot, lying far up in the very bosom of the eternal snow regions of the mountain. I felt not a little curious to see what sort of a garden could be got up in such a district; but, independently of this, I made sure of seeing much amongst the hills to repay the fatigue of the march, and off we set accordingly. Our first step, as the guides termed it, was along the face of the rock on the left bank of this great river, rather than sea of ice—though certainly it does resemble the ocean when its surface is ruffled by a gale of wind blowing in the opposite direction to that of a strong current.

The actual surface of the ice is also quite rough, being so granulated as to cranch under the tread in a manner which renders the footing secure. Some difficulty was occasioned by the enormous rents in the ice which crossed our path, and made

it often necessary to go several hundred yards on one side before we could reach a point where the crevice became narrow enough to step or leap over. This last exploit of leaping the guides executed with wonderful agility, by means of the long poles or *batons* which we all carried—but they were extremely averse to our trying such flying leaps, and added to their intreaties on that score sundry stories of indiscreet travellers who, having missed their footing, were projected into the abyss for more than a hundred fathoms, and of course were never seen or heard of more ! One of these, they told us, had been fished up by means of a long line with a hook at the end of it. The unfortunate traveller was of course quite dead ; and what marked the dreadful violence with which he had been wedged into the rent, was the fact of his watch being squeezed quite flat, and spread out to twice its size.

The only real danger, however, which we were threatened with, was one against which no precaution could altogether protect even the experienced guides themselves, who gave us fairly to understand that there was little chance of our escaping unless we attended strictly to their directions. At a certain part of our course, the path along which we were struggling came close to the base of the cliff overhanging the *mer-de-glace*. On its summit there lay a thick coating of ice and half-melted

snow, mixed with numerous blocks of granite, cast down by the avalanches. The frequent sound of these cataracts of snow we could hear in different directions amongst the mountains, and some of the avalanches we actually saw not far from us. The weather being excessively hot, the melting snow caused innumerable cascades on both sides of the valley, which were all very pretty and picturesque, so long as we kept at a respectable distance from the cliff; but unfortunately just over the very point where our road happened to touch the foot of the precipice, we were startled by beholding a mass of granite about as big as a mail-coach, barely held up by the ice in which it had probably at one time been completely imbedded, but out of which more than three-quarters of its bulk now protruded.

The guides stopped, looked anxiously at the huge stone suspended directly over the path, then cast their eyes to the left to see if it were possible to deviate a few yards to avoid passing directly underneath this monster, which threatened to crush us all under its weight. Finally they looked at one another, and then closed themselves together into a knot, and, without saying anything to us, continued for some minutes speaking most earnestly in a patois totally unintelligible to us. At the end of this parley, during which we began to fear that our expedition must here stop short, two of the guides,

without consulting us, or saying more than, "Be silent and steady, or you are lost!" suddenly seized the foremost of our party, and with the swiftness of Chamois goats dashed along directly under the stone, which they afterwards explained might have been shaken down at any moment by the mere tremor in the air caused by our speaking.

As soon as the first of us had been thus whisked across the point of danger, another was spirited off in the same manner. The guides then returned, one by one, stepping underneath the great rock as cautiously as if they had been treading on eggs, and transported the remaining two gentlemen to the safe side. We now begged permission of the guides to set up a shout, in order to bring the stone down, that we might enjoy the crash in safety, and appreciate the full value of our escape, by witnessing the havoc which the avalanche would cause. "Yes!" said the guides, "but who knows the extent of these things? How many more such fellows may not be lying further up, ready to topple down upon us, or how shall we be sure that the path, now open for us, may not be so blocked by the falling stones and ice that our retreat will be rendered impossible? No! no! let the rock alone; and very thankful may we be if we shall find it sticking where it now is when we return here some hours hence."

After this adventure we struck more into the centre of the frozen sea, the surface of which became not only more and more rugged, but its general inclination steeper, as we advanced; so much so, that at times it required some dexterity to preserve our balance. In this respect I think I had an advantage over my shore-going friends; and indeed one of the guides said to me that he thought I must have sea legs, from the manner in which I poised myself, and the little comparative difficulty I appeared to experience in going along the uneven face of the glacier. Near the centre of the *mer-de-glace*, and in various other directions, but especially along the middle, we observed enormous ridges formed of the debris which had fallen down from the granite mountains far up in the valleys where the glaciers took their rise. And here I may mention that the *mer-de-glace* is, in fact, a river of ice, formed by the confluence of several other similar frozen streams, descending in different directions from the higher Alps along the steep valleys of which the eternal snows belonging to their climate are gradually urged downwards by the fresh accumulations of successive seasons. In the winter these snows are deposited in thick layers which lie pretty quietly till the heat of spring, and the approaching summer, loosens their hold, and sends them thundering down in avalanches from all the adjacent heights. Each of

these avalanches carries with it a mass of broken rocks, which in their fall strike off the angles of lower strata, and so the work of demolition goes on even in spring. During the violent heats of summer not a moment passes without a fall of this kind somewhere ; a process greatly aided, of course, not only by the innumerable cascades which undermine the snows, but by under-currents, which, like the grease and soap with which the “ways” are lubricated when a ship is launched, set in motion whole acres of half-melted snow, as thickly marked with granite boulders as a plum-pudding is with currants and raisins.

I took some pains to form an estimate of the size of one of these ridges of broken stones, called Moraines by the guides, which I found about a league, or three miles, in length, 100 feet high in the middle, and about 500 feet wide at the base. The stones composing this huge wall or mound of debris varied in size from a billiard-ball to that of a small house ; and some gigantic fragments were pointed out to us by the guides which they declared they had watched for many years, slowly descending into the valley of Chamouny. One of these was an immense mass, forty or fifty feet in its least dimension, which had arrived so very near the edge of the cliff over which the mer-de-glace pours itself like a

frozen Niagara, that we half expected to see it fall over. The guides laughed at our impatience, and said it might be two or three years yet before the glacier would have advanced far enough to precipitate the rock over the edge. In winter the course of the glacier is completely stopped, at which time not the slightest sound is heard from end to end; but in summer, when we saw it, the whole was in motion. This fact the guides made evident to us by desiring us to watch attentively by the side of the Moraine for a minute or two; we then perceived that not an instant elapsed without the stones being moved in such a way as to produce either a grinding sound, or to tumble some of the fragments from a higher to a lower level.

After about seven miles' travelling along the ice, we gained the shore on the right, or eastern bank, and though we were at first very glad to find ourselves upon the smooth granite, which had been well polished by the descent of a long succession of avalanches, we discovered that we were now incurring vastly greater risks than any we had yet encountered. This new danger was owing to the steepness of the surface, combined with the smoothness of the rocks along which we had to wind our way, frequently on the very edge of precipices more than a thousand feet in perpendicular height! At first all the party expressed considerable appre-

hensions, and at length one of the Frenchmen fairly declared that he could not possibly go on, for the soles of his shoes had become like glass, and as the face of the rock was scarcely less smooth, he had no notion of risking his life to see a garden which he was quite sure could contain but few flowers to repay the trouble and hazard of such a journey.

The guides and his companions laughed at his fears, and urged him to go on for a little distance, when a similar instability of footing having occurred to myself, I was actually unable to advance a single step without the imminent hazard of slipping over the edge of the cliff. On turning round to view the path up which we had been labouring for the last hour, it appeared so formidably steep that we felt as if it would be equally impossible to get back, and we began to think the scrape not a trifling one by any means. It was suggested at this critical juncture by one of the men that we should take off our shoes and stockings. No sooner had we done so than in an instant, as if by magic, we felt such entire confidence in our footing that we could advance without apprehension to the very edge of the rock, and venture along places which even the guides declined approaching. While I was wondering at this, and speculating on the manner in which a new sense, or at all events a new faculty, had been imparted to

us, one of the guides pointed out the manner in which not only the toes but the ball of the foot, and even the heel, now accommodated themselves to the nature of the ground. This mountain philosopher, taught by long experience of danger and difficulty, assured us that even in the most polished parts of the rock there were inequalities, almost imperceptible to the eye, but sufficient, it appeared, to offer points for the muscles of the foot to grasp, when the stiff leather sole of the shoe, which Nature never intended us to use in such places, was removed. "Look at a fly," continued the mountaineer, "and see how he moves along a perpendicular pane of glass, and learn from him to leave Nature to herself when you wish to make the best use of her gifts."

Except at the dangerous spot where we had been edified by this lecture there was no occasion to apply it, for the last portion of our long journey lay amongst snow so soft that as it reached halfway from the ankle to the knee at every step, proved not a little fatiguing. When we came at length to the Jardin or Courtil, as the guides called it, we found merely a flat space of bare rock, about a quarter of an acre in size, with here and there a few half-starved grey lichens clinging to it. Pretty flowers indeed! The guides presently composed themselves to sleep, while we took our dinner, and

then rambled from side to side of this strange spot, so new to us, and so different from anything which we had ever seen before. We were far more tired than the guides, for to them it was nothing to march without a stop up the mountains for nearly five hours,—the time it cost us to reach the Jardin. On the other hand, while they were so indifferent, or so accustomed, to the wonders of this extraordinary scene, we were so highly excited that rest of any kind, still less sleep, was quite out of the question. To describe such a scene is so manifestly impossible, that the attempt—unaided by anything short of a panorama from the hand of Burford—would be impertinent. But I may mention that its peculiarity consists in the entire absence of every single thing—except the sky overhead—to which our eyes have been accustomed to look at elsewhere. There is not only not a single tree in sight, but not the smallest appearance of a shrub, nor a single blade of grass, far or near, nor even the least speck of green. Of course there are no traces of man's habitation, nor that of fowls of the air, nor of beasts of the field; not even a fly buzzes about. In short, no living things appear in this wide world of snow. There is plenty of that, however, as one of my companions remarked with a shrug which implied anything but admiration of the desolate landscape. But notwithstanding the French-

man's shrug, the scene possesses very great beauties in its way; for though everything is white, the shades and even tints which it presents, like those of Wouvermans' celebrated white horse, are of boundless variety. In some directions the snow sends back so dazzling a glare that, without reducing the pupil of the eye to a point like that of a cat looking at the sun, we can scarcely bear to face it. In other directions, not only the clefts or ravines in the ice, but even broad valleys, are cast into a depth, as well as breadth, of shade which would enchant Martin the painter, and might have given him a hint for a polar palace, should it occur to his magnificent fancy to represent the court of the "ice king" of the German poets. In some few quarters, indeed, owing to the angle at which the light falls, or perhaps to the slight touch of injury which the purity of the virgin snow has received by the abrasion of the dark-coloured granite precipices over which it has been swept, there occurs scarcely any appearance of colour. Of top lights, as the painters call them, there rest an abundant store on the summit of every ridge, and every inequality, even, of the lower masses, both of the glaciers in the bottom of the valleys and of the rocks which include them. I speak not of the fantastic shadows which chequer the scenery on all sides, and by flinging

before us distorted projections of the mountain tops on the inclined faces of the snow, teach us more error than truth respecting their real forms.

In viewing the distant and totally inaccessible peaks of the Alps, from such a situation as we then stood upon, I remember feeling a sensation of awe, which I fancied would be transient, and that a further acquaintance would remove it. Still it was so pleasing a sensation that I cherished it, and dwelt upon it as long as I could, in dread that, like the guides, I might cease, from too great familiarity, to be conscious of so exciting a sentiment of sublimity as this first very near view of the higher Alps had produced in my mind. But I found that novelty is amongst the least of the charms of such regions, and that a more ample experience only develops more and more their inherent beauty, and that exactly in proportion as the means of viewing these majestic regions becomes varied and extended, so the delight which a contemplation of them produces is expanded also.

Yet, after all, I must honestly acknowledge, that while I have several times in my life become thoroughly tired of what is called fine scenery, namely, the richly-wooded and highly-coloured, I am unconscious of having ever been tired of the rugged, barren, snowy Alps. Their lofty and unattainable snows, indeed, give them a kind of

astronomical character, which, by lifting them quite out of the vulgar world of ordinary life, renders them objects of distant but unceasing admiration.

One of the calmest and most unmixed of human pleasures I am acquainted with, is practical astronomy; and next to that, and perhaps for similar reasons, I should be disposed to rank the contemplation of such enormous ranges as the Alps and Andes. To this hour, for example, I remember the singular enjoyment I once experienced when sailing along the coast of Mexico, on the south-west side, or that washed by the great Pacific Ocean, on coming unexpectedly in sight of two immensely high peaks, each of them almost as high as Mont Blanc. There was nothing wonderful in this, it is true, in such a region of mountains; but what excited our curiosity was the circumstance of two such splendid objects having as yet found no place on any of our maps, which was the more to be wondered at as they stood apart from the main ridge of the Andes, and thus became very striking objects, even in a country fertile in such scenes. We felt so much as if we had made a discovery, that even the unpolished seamen, who are generally careless about such matters, expressed to one another their admiration of the new-found peaks.

I strongly suspect that my worthy companions in the excursion to the Jardin did not enter so

deeply into these refinements,—some of which, or at all events their expression, may have been due to the feverish state into which the unwonted exercise had thrown my blood. The same cause, it is true, had been in action in the case of my fellow-travellers, but its expression, as will be seen, took another direction. In most hotels on the continent there is what is called the “*Livre des Etrangers*,” a book in which travellers are requested only to put down their names, but not to make any remarks. In spite of this admonition, many persons, panting to become authors, in however humble a line of composition, have added to their names the strangest set of observations, some in verse and some in prose, and all full of sage counsel as to the best methods of seeing the curiosities of the spot. I suppose it is needless for me to say that, with all the knowledge which those who have never left home can possibly have acquired, by reading printed books, of the absurdities which travel writers are bold enough to put their names to, their finest flights in the art are feeble in comparison to the hopeless mass of nonsense which distinguishes these precious “*Livres de voyageurs*.” The late Sir James Mackintosh once drily remarked that, while Shakspeare stood at the top of English literature, the Bombay Magazine (to which we may suppose he had been bored to contribute) stood at

the bottom ; so I think I am safe in saying, that if the manuscript of the Waverley novels be the most interesting of modern autographs, the contents of the “ Traveller’s Book ” are the most stupid of handwritings extant.

This, it appeared, was not the opinion of the self-satisfied contributors, amongst whom may be classed the members of our party to the Jardin. No sooner had they returned and ordered supper than they called loudly for the book, and while one of them wrote, the others dictated a narrative of the day’s adventures, in which, by a most singular perversity, there was not one word of truth from the beginning to the end ! When this extraordinary procès verbal of our proceedings was concluded, it was duly signed by the persons who had drawn it up, and then handed to me for signature, as a matter of course ; I felt somewhat embarrassed, as I did not wish to offend persons who had been my companions in so hard a day’s work ; and yet I felt reluctant to put my name to a purely imaginary story, reported as a fact. On being pressed by them to give my reasons, I got off by saying that, in my opinion, a simple statement of what we had seen, without any embellishment whatever, would have been far more interesting, and probably more useful to others, than such a fictitious romance as they had written.

My friends stared at this criticism, which, like most articles in that line, was not much relished; but while they were considering how it should be taken, the waiters entered with supper, which fortunate interruption, in the twinkling of an eye, made us all of one accord.

CHAPTER V.

A FLIRTATION.

ON the following morning I felt as tired and bruised as if I had been rolled from end to end of the mer-de-glace ; and, although I had appointed the guide to be ready to accompany me to the top of Mont Brévan, at sunrise, he too had been so well worked by the expedition of the day before, that he was not forthcoming,—and I most gladly turned myself round on the other tack, and snoozed away till ten o'clock. This additional nap having completely re-established me, I made shift to reach the top of the mountain in three hours and a half, an indiscreet and needless degree of speed, as I afterwards found out. The view of Mont Blanc from this eminence, which the guide in his raptures declared had been expressly placed there as a sort of platform, from which to show off the “ monarch of mountains,” well repaired the severe labour and too rapid ascent. An hour and a half served for the descent, so that after the excursion was over,

there remained much of the day to spend. The heat being excessive, I preferred going to bed, in hopes of laying in a stock of strength for the formidable fatigues with which we were threatened in the next day's journey, over the Col de Bon Homme, one of the western shoulders of Mont Blanc.

No sleep, however, could I get for the flies, which, though not such deadly foes to rest as musquitoes are, fall not far behind them in the art of tormenting a man whose blood has been heated by exercise. I was not very sorry, therefore, to find, that our master of the ceremonies had determined we should begin our march this evening; though fortunately for us weaker vessels, he, a cast-iron sort of person in general, was himself so much fatigued with another long excursion, that he had decided that we were to ride instead of walking.

We mounted our true-footed mules after a hearty dinner, and set off for St. Gervais, the first stage on our way to the Col de Bon Homme. We happened never to have heard before of St. Gervais, and knew nothing more about it than that hot and cold springs, as well as baths, were to be found in that neighbourhood. But as our object was to ascend the higher Alps, and not to drink mineral waters, or to indulge in hot baths, we looked to the place in question merely as a resting-place, and

cared little whether it were a town, a village, or a single post-house, and never dreamed of what it really proved to be.

As long as daylight lasted, we got on pretty well, though it must be confessed our vocabulary of laudatory epithets was becoming a little threadbare, and we were beginning mutually to bore and be bored by one another's exclamations of—"Beautiful!" "How beautiful!" "God bless me, is not that beautiful?" "How very fine!" "Did you ever see anything so fine?" "Can anything be finer?" "It is indeed grand!" "How exceedingly grand!" "Nothing in nature can be grander!" "Exquisite!" &c. &c. &c. After the sun had not only set, but carried with him all his light, his rose-tints, livid hues, and so forth, and left us quite in the dark, with vile roads, tired mules, and the eager calls of hunger, (for the digestive organs are doubly active amongst the Alps!) we became dead-sick of the picturesque, and being rather crusty with one another, wished earnestly for the close of this long day's journey. The guides, too, against whose advice we had set out so late in the day, proved but sorry comforters in this season of discomposure; for they, instead of cheering us up, as is their wont, told us only of the length, steepness, and roughness of the long and weary road still a-head of us.

In this style we trudged on, so forlorn, spiritless, and completely knocked up, that not one of the party believed it possible any circumstance could occur of sufficient interest to rouse us from our lethargy. We had been told, also, so much of the miserable accommodation of the remoter Alpine valleys, that we reckoned not only upon finding sorry lodgings, but little or no food in them; for, though the guides repeatedly declared there was an excellent house near the baths, we were much too sulky to believe their report.

At length, about ten o'clock, when almost entirely exhausted with vexation and fatigue, we found ourselves by the side of a roaring stream, coursing down the centre of a narrow valley, which after a few windings opened into a wide avenue, or what in the darkness seemed to be one. At the farther end, under the deep shadow of the mountain, there appeared to us to lie a grand castle, and a near approach did not belie the first impression. The guide had no sooner touched the door than it flew open, and two fair damsels walked out to receive us, each holding a lighted taper in her hand. Both were so becomingly, even elegantly dressed, that we felt quite at a loss whether to consider them as attendants, or as the mistresses of the mansion. What followed only increased the mystery, for as we passed through the lobby, a

still more gaily-attired and noble-looking dame stepped forward to conduct us, as she said, to the banquet, which was all ready, and the company waiting only for us ! As she spoke these words, she ushered us into a hall, so splendidly lighted, that the transition from total darkness in which we had been travelling for some hours, at first quite dazzled our eyes. When we could look round, we beheld a company of thirty or forty persons at a supper-table, at which seats had been reserved for us ; the whole scene having as magical an appearance as anything in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments ! While lost in astonishment at what all this might mean, we gladly availed ourselves of these unlooked-for and wonderful preparations, and readily joined the feast set before us, with a zest sharpened by the previous fatigue and despair.

When I had time to look about me, I discovered that I was seated near a French lady, with four pretty daughters, one of whom looked so archly and inquisitively, and seemed so ready to talk, that I ventured to commence an acquaintance without any introduction. She caught at the opportunity with the ready vivacity of her country, and as there happened to be a vacant place next me, which I made a slight telegraphic signal for her to occupy, she presently took possession of it.

In this merry coterie were soon forgotten all the toils and troubles of the weary journey.

My fair coquette, who was infinitely amused at our having mistaken an inn, Don Quixote fashion, for an enchanted castle, after quizzing our ignorance most unmercifully, set about explaining that the feast before us was not enchanted at all, but merely the table-d'hôte supper of the celebrated watering-place of St. Gervais—that our magnificent reception, and all the preparations which had surprised us so much, arose simply from the frequency of visitors like ourselves arriving at all hours—that the stately lady who received us in the hall was the worthy mistress of the hotel, who, on hearing the bell, had courteously left the head of the table to welcome us—and, finally, that the two damsels—or fair virgins of the tapers—who met us at the door, were no other than those distinguished personages called house-maids, in charge of the sleeping apartments, who came to reconnoitre the numbers of the new party, in order to know how many beds would be required—and so on with all the rest of the scene !

The illusion was gone, but the substance remained, and I made my ground so firmly with the ladies, that on their quitting the great hall, they said that as my lodging lay near their house, which stood at the distance of only one hundred

and fifty yards, I might just as well take advantage of the light of their lantern across the green. Being nothing loath, I gave one arm to the mother, my pretty little flirt took the other, and away we set, laughing and talking as cheerily and confidentially as if we had known one another for the last half-a-dozen years !

CHAPTER VI.

AN ALPINE SUPPER.

LONG before the rest of the watering-place world of St. Gervais were thinking of stirring from their beds, I was up and dressed, and brushing away the morning dew on the glorious mountain sides, that I might enjoy the never-ending, still-beginning pleasure of seeing the sun rise among the snowy ridges in the east, some of which, though not quite so sublime as those of Mont Blanc, are perhaps fully more beautiful in their outline.

From a few words let fall over night by my fair friend of the supper, I was led to suppose that it was also her practice to take an early walk near the fountain-head, or 'source,' of the mineral waters to which the great celebrity of these baths is due. As I had dreamed half the night over this prospect of a meeting, I felt a little fluttered, on hearing the tread of a single person, as I traced the narrow solitary path in the forest, and half fearing that I had carried my advances too far, I was considering how I might best back out of the scrape myself,

without, at the same time, altogether, breaking the young lady's heart. But, at the turn of the road, what should my expected wood nymph prove, but a "lubberly post-boy!" Not that exactly, though just as bad, being only the carpenter of the works, on an early inspection of the baths.

Although I felt so provoked, that I could scarcely answer him with civility, he carried me to the spring, and there, in an evil hour, persuaded me to drink a tumblerful of its abominable waters; and not content with this, advised me to jump into one of the hot baths. Had this luxury been within my reach at the close instead of the beginning of this arduous day's journey, it might have done me good,—as it was, either it or the horrid water did me such mischief, that I venture strongly to recommend any one who has an Alpine walk of thirty miles a-head of him, to avoid mineral springs and hot baths as he would the plague.

The day proved roasting hot. Not the least trace of a cloud was to be seen above, and as not a breath of air was stirring below in the mountain valleys, we were almost choked with dust by the time we reached the village of Contamines, and so parched with thirst, that, in spite of the vehement remonstrances of the guides, we swallowed glass after glass of ice-cold water, qualified, that is, rendered still more prejudicial, by the admixture of the sourest kind of

wine. One of the travelling party, who had more prudence than the rest, but who did not join us till the aforesaid debauch was over, lectured us so stoutly on the danger of an inflammation of the stomach, that we hurried on at a great pace in order to regain the warmth which the iced water had abstracted. Just as this point was accomplished, and we had become as indiscreetly heated as we had previously been cooled, it came on to rain so suddenly, that before we could get hold of our umbrellas, which had been left with the muleteers, we were thoroughly drenched.

In our frame of mind, and with youth and health on our side, these were annoyances only to be laughed at; but we presently discovered a more serious cause of uneasiness in the ignorance of our guides. Having made the unpleasant discovery at the baths of St. Gervais, that neither of the two men we had brought with us from Chamouni had ever made the tour of Mont Blanc, a debate had arisen as to the propriety of taking one additional guide who offered himself, or of saving the twelve francs which he would have cost us. Economy prevailed; and, as usual in such cases, we had very nearly paid with our lives for this foolish thrift,—a fate which actually befel several members of another party, in attempting to cross the very same pass, a few years after the time I am speaking of. Let no one, there-

fore, when rambling amongst the higher Alps, forget that no money is so well bestowed as the wages of first-rate guides, nor is anything so fraught with danger as disregarding their advice, or declining their assistance in difficulties.

By the time the shower of rain, or rather of cold sleet, above alluded to, was over, we began to find ourselves involved in much more serious embarrassments. We had now ascended the Col, or high shoulder of the mountain, till we were almost beyond the range of vegetation ; but no path could we discover, while the cliffs before and on each side of us, either offered no opening at all, or offered too many, since no one knew which to follow. The day also was fast advancing, and it is hard to say what we should have done had we not espied a cottage at a distance. The involuntary shout of joy with which the sight was hailed, both by guides and masters, betrayed the anxiety which all had felt, and the necessity of obtaining better pilotage than we possessed.

Within the house, if such a wretched pile of turf and stones deserve the name, we found a nice busy old body seated between her two children, or more probably, her grandchildren, one of whom, a boy, was pounding a mess of salt,—the other, a pretty little girl, though as brown as any berry, sitting on a bench with a huge wooden bowl of

milk in her lap. They seemed greatly surprised at our invasion of their cabin, but with the free hospitality of the mountains, the old lady pressed her stores of milk and cheese upon us,—handing us wooden spoons, and setting before each one a bowl of milk. Thus, to the vile mineral water of the spring, the coffee and fruit of a copious breakfast, the iced water and sour wine of Contamines, were now superadded a bowl of milk, and a slice of hard goat-milk cheese. Verily, a man ought to be fitted with a stomach like an ostrich if he is to take such liberties !

Our luncheon, or dinner, or whatever name it deserves, being ended, not for want of more appetite, but for want of more to eat, we propounded to the old lady our much more important difficulty arising out of the ignorance of our guides, and asked the venerable dame if she would allow the boy to go with us to show us the way ?

“ Bless me ! ” said the old lady, “ did you not know that the Col de Bonhomme was one of the most dangerous passes that we have, and that no one should attempt it without experienced guides ? Why did you not take an additional guide from the baths ? ”

Our over-economical cash-keeper looked rather put out by this appeal to his prudence *versus* his pocket,—and even the guides seemed not a little

ashamed of themselves for having too greedily undertaken what they could not perform, so that none of us had a word to say for ourselves. At first the old lady consented to our taking the boy with us,—but, suddenly changing her mind, she exclaimed, “ You’ll all be lost in the snow, and the boy along with you—or you’ll fall over the cliffs—or lose your way in the ravines,—so I’ll e’en go myself.”

The spirited old girl having made this magnanimous resolution, lost no time in preparing herself, for, as she said, looking to the western sky, “ we have but scant daylight for the long and laborious task before us.” At first sight we had supposed her too old and infirm to have guided any one more than fifty yards from her own hut,—but no sooner had she resolved to accompany us, than she skipped up a ladder into an open loft facing us, which occupied half the length of the building, and there, though still in our presence, she made her hasty mountain toilet, without any reserves, sincere or affected. Her first operation consisted in drawing on a long pair of blue worsted stockings, then she pinned round her waist a red apron, and having planted firmly on her head one of the great hats of the Savoyard peasantry, she secured it by a double turn of a long blue handkerchief or scarf tied under her chin. This done, she ran to the cupboard, filled out and drank off a large

tumbler of wine, poured another down the boy's throat, and, on her way back to the cupboard, swallowed a second allowance herself.

"Now," she exclaimed, "I am all ready!" and off she shot, exclaiming in answer to our entreaties for her to mount, that the mountaineers never rode—a most false assertion—for she had not gone above a dozen yards before she seized the bridle of one of the mules, led it to a stone, and having mounted, continued riding all the way to the top of the pass.

Whether it was that the dame saw we were a little crest-fallen and worn out, and thought we required stirring up, or that the wine had got in her old head—or that such was her natural disposition, I know not—but never woman rattled on as she did. Her voice though shrill was not unmusical, and her words being articulated with uncommon distinctness, we could gather a good deal of what she said, even when she addressed herself to the guides in the "patois" of the district. Her comical anecdotes, and merry jests at the helpless condition of the party, kept us laughing the whole way, and, perhaps, her good humour as essentially contributed to the success of our expedition, as did her local knowledge, without which we could not have stirred a step in safety in those wild regions.

On reaching the top of a ridge between 7000

and 8000 feet high, there lay before us so grand a view of Mont Blanc, that, thinking this must be the summit level of the Col, we halted to admire the surpassing beauties of the scene; but our lady of the snows would by no means allow such trifling, as she called it, and rather angrily urged us onwards—loudly declaring that if we did not make haste, we should all be benighted amongst the hills, and find it equally difficult to return or to advance.

Both our energies and our fears were quickened on this occasion by what we had been reading in Ebel's celebrated "*Manuel du Voyageur en Suisse*," probably the best guide-book ever published. Speaking of the Col de Bonhomme, he says: "This pass is extremely steep, and is dangerous on account of the precipices by which it is fringed; and it is on this account that the route should be attempted only when the weather is calm and serene. Even the mules have no small difficulty in getting along, in consequence of the extreme slipperiness of the rocks at some stages of the pass."

It was a grievous disappointment to us all, to find that so far from being at the top of the ridge, we had yet a long way to climb; indeed every one of the party was now so fatigued, that I do not think anything short of the alarming stimulus which the old lady applied, would have dragged us along. As for me—the wicked indulgences of the day—the

mineral beverage—the ravenous breakfast—the iced water and sour wine—the cream and the cheese—pressed so sorely upon me, that I really thought I must have dropped, and been left to end my days in some crevice of the rocks; for the road had become far too steep and rugged to admit of our mounting the mules, and sometimes the path coasted along steep banks of slippery snow, or almost as slippery faces of rock.

At length, after a weary climb, we did gain the top of the pass, and then, to be sure, we were well repaid for all our toils. It will often happen in surmounting such ridges that we are painfully reminded of the beautiful figure which the poet has borrowed from them; and as real Alps o'er real Alps arise, we are forced to moralise, in spite of ourselves, being taught by experience how essentially, instead of becoming less, the labours increase as the work advances. Perhaps I may be permitted to remark, in passing over the Alps, that Pope in his celebrated passage rather over-illustrates, if I may so speak, his position, for it is not true, as the poet clearly means to insinuate, in the arts and sciences at least, that the growing labours of the way have a discouraging effect on the student who is ardent in his inquiries. On the contrary, it would rather seem that this very inexhaustible quality of scientific research, of which he speaks,

furnishes one of its principal charms; and that if the summit ridge of any science could be reached—which is impossible—the pleasure of the pursuit would be at an end.

As the passage alluded to may perhaps not be present to the memory of some of my young readers, I venture to quote it just as we spouted it aloud to one another on the top of what had seemed—but erroneously as we then found—the highest crest of the mountain:—

Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts;
While, from the bounded level of our mind,
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New, distant, scenes of endless science rise!
So, pleased at first, the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales and seem to tread the sky!
The eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last;
But those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labour of the lengthen'd way;
The increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps o'er Alps arise!

Little recked our petticoated guide of these refinements; and, for that matter, we stopped not to speculate on the causes of our pleasure, which, in spite of all our fatigue, was very great. I do not think that ever, before or since, I have beheld a more splendid prospect. On looking back to

the north and west we saw the valleys of Montjoie and Beaufort formed by several ridges of towering Alps; and before us, in the east, a great basin of a circular form, with our old friend Mont Blanc on one side of it, and an endless succession of lesser ridges of the most fantastic forms on the other. On the tops of all these mountains, including that on which we stood, there lay a coating—God only knows how deep—of eternal snow,—at some places smooth, pure, and perfectly white; at others, scarped, rugged, and tarnished with the fragments of ten thousand avalanches. But, in the valley beneath, in which the Isère takes its rise, and on all the lower parts of those sides of the mountains which face the warm south, there lay before us a carpet of such enchanting verdure, that we could have feasted on the sight for ever; and much we envied the droves of cattle we saw straying on the grass many thousands of feet below us.

By this time the sun had fallen so low, that only the tops of the hills were enjoying its full light, and our bronze-faced venerable female guide repeatedly called to us to lose no more time with our nonsensical raptures; at the same moment, with very significant gesticulations, she indicated the way we were to take, bawling her instructions as to our course into the ears of the sorely-bothered male attendants,

who had long ceased to merit the name of guides. Our alarm at this juncture became great on finding that our only stay—albeit only an elderly gentlewoman among a party of young and active men!—was about to abandon us to our fate, and to return to her home in the valley. We stoutly remonstrated, and tried to persuade her of the unreasonableness, as well as wickedness, of leaving such a party, in such a place, and at such an hour. “Can you,” we exclaimed, half jocularly and half in earnest, “can you leave us on the top of this high and snowy ridge, at sunset, with several leagues of difficult and dangerous journey still before us, a great part of which, by your own showing, lies along the very edge of a glacier?”

She turned so deaf an ear to all these remonstrances, that at last we became seriously alarmed; and I do not know what must have happened had not the proverbial effect of gold on a female heart been brought into play. Our prudent purse-bearer had already tried the efficacy of silver, by offering her twice the number of pieces stipulated for, but from the proffered money she selected only the exact number agreed upon, and then, to our horror, fairly turned her back upon us, and trudged off! While this abortive negotiation was going on, I had observed the little effect produced by the sight of a handful of five-franc pieces, and suddenly

recollecting Gray's fable of the Cat and the Fish ran after her and showed her a gold coin. She paused, looked first at the western sky, where the sun reigned no longer, then at the top of Mont Blanc, and lastly at the valley beneath, as if she were calculating the chances for and against our necks, on the score of light, steepness, and distance. Having made her computations, she clutched the gold out of my hand, pocketed it with a loud laugh, and then turning round, planted her arms a-kimbo, and with only a shrill exclamation for us all to follow, dashed down the hill side with the speed of a chamois !

It is not probable that this good lady knew much about the mathematical theory of the curve of quickest descent, but we soon knew practically that it was exceedingly difficult to follow her ladyship down the bank of snow. Nevertheless away we all ran, as well as we might; and what was very ludicrous, the mules, apparently as well accustomed to such scenes as the old dame herself, fairly placed themselves on their rumps, with all their four feet gathered together into a knot in front of them, and slid from top to bottom with a degree of confidence which their human masters were far from sharing. At one place I quite lost my hold of the ground with my feet, and feeling my head beginning to spin round, might have been projected forwards with

accelerating velocity over the precipice, had it not been for the timely assistance of the mountain "bâton," the right use of which I had learned only a few days before, on my expedition to the "Jardin."

It is worth while saying a few words about this baton, which is one of the most important parts of an Alpine traveller's equipment. It is a stout staff, generally of ash, between five and six feet long, with an iron spike at its larger end, and serves at all times as a pleasant walking-stick, but is peculiarly useful in climbing hills, by bringing the otherwise wasted power of the arms to help the ascent. It is of still greater use in coming down steep hills, though very serviceable in going along their sides, at places where there may happen to be no path. But on no occasion is the baton so indispensable as in descending a steep face of snow, by the operation technically known by the word "glisser," to slip or slide, which is thus performed:—The traveller plants his heels in the snow, inclines himself a little backwards out of the perpendicular, so as to rest a certain portion of his weight on the baton, the spike of which being thrust into the snow behind him, or rather on one side, one of his hands grasps it near the top, the other holds it fast near the bottom, the baton itself being inclined a little forwards. His upper hand is thus thrown before him, somewhat lower than his head, while the other hand

is behind, and near the ground. If the baton be on his right side, the right hand is the lowest of the two, and *vice versa*. When he wishes to remain fast, he has only to thrust the spike of his baton firmly into the snow, keeping the upper end well up and back withal ; in this position the spike digs itself into and grasps the snow. On the other hand, when he wishes to accelerate his pace, he has only to incline the baton forwards, by which its friction or grasp of the snow is lessened, owing to the spike no longer sticking perpendicularly into it, and acting like a hook : on the contrary, it now slides readily along. In this way an expert "glisseur" can regulate the speed of his descent with wonderful precision. He can even stop himself suddenly, by merely bringing his baton again upright, and by the same impulse forcing it deep into the snow, so that, in fact, he makes the spike act the part of the fluke of an anchor, whenever he wishes to stop.

By this slippery process, and guided always by our female comodore, we made our way in about five minutes down so long a bank of snow that, if we could have come up it at all, which from its steepness I should say was impossible, it would have cost us an hour's hard work. We now found ourselves upon terra firma, and very glad we were to land there with unbroken bones. We had still sundry cliffs to get over, and two or three streams

to cross, but these were trifles. At length, after much scrambling, growling, and laughing, we gained the long-wished-for rich grassy banks, upon which we had looked down with such longing eyes from the top of the far-off Col. It was now nearly dark, but from the numerous cattle we passed, we felt sure we must be near some habitation, and this hope giving us fresh spirits we passed merrily along the turf, the springiness of which proved a vast relief after the dead tread on the non-elastic snow. The air, too, which, on the top of the pass, had nipped us to the very bone, felt at least twenty degrees warmer in the valley, and proved still more balmy and soothing from the perfect calm hanging over the velvet pasture.

The cottage or *châlet* of Motet, which the old lady took us to, turned out,—as such things always, and showy cities often, do,—a miserable contrast to the luxurious splendour of the external world. The hospitable owner indeed gave us a cheerful welcome, and seeing us shivering with cold, busied himself in heaping such wood as he had on the fire. But not a chair was to be seen, nor a bench, nor a single stool, nor even a truckle-bed; and the soft mud floor being quite wet with a mixture of milk and water, curds and whey—to say nothing of the impure paddling of the feet of sundry hogs and dogs, our fellow guests—it was quite

impossible either to sit or lie down ! When we turned our eyes from the melancholy prospect under foot to the ceiling of this poor abode, we could see the stars twinkling through the rafters and the numerous holes over head, while the lateral beauties of the Alps might have been observed through the cracks in the walls ; in short, except in the north of Scotland or in Ireland, I never saw a habitation so little commodious either for its Christian or its hoggish inhabitants.

This sorry sight, viewed at first by the wearied party with surprise, presently excited a feeling of anger — though with whom to be displeased we knew not. The next emotion was a sort of despair, followed after a time by one of such ridicule, that we burst into a fit of laughter at the extremity of our petty distress. Into this joke, without understanding it, the good old lady peaceably entered, though by this time she was pretty well done up, like the rest. At length it was proposed by one of the party to send out an expedition of discovery, to see whether or not the case were totally irremediable. Every one said it would be a good thing, but nobody started, and we all continued soaking in the dirty puddles of the floor, until the original proposer of the voyage undertook to perform it himself. In his official report on his return, he stated, that he had not

proceeded far before he fell in with a chalet, resembling the miserable abode first discovered in all respects but one—for this new-found dwelling had above it a loft—in that loft was hay—good dry hay, on a fine dry floor, and overhead a whole roof. What luxury ! Away we ran, and threw ourselves out at full length upon the hay, in such an ecstasy of repose and enjoyment as I, for my share, never experienced before.

The worthy host, who was extremely amused with our raptures about his loft and his hay, very soon brought us up a great vessel holding at least two gallons of hot milk, which he placed on a small round table about a foot high, adding a loaf or two of his rye bread ; and to each one he gave a wooden bowl and a wooden spoon. We chanced to have a little tea with us ; the water was boiled in a trice ; and, in short, our supper proved most delicious. We of course sent for our lady of the valley, never doubting that a bowl of tea would be well bestowed on her—but she had never seen such a thing in her life ! We afterwards gave her some, and tried to explain how it was to be cooked. She put a few leaves into her mouth, and having tasted them, returned the paper, saying she could make no use of such stuff.

Being now, however, far more disposed for sleep than for talk, we paid off our female guide, sent away the short-legged table, shook an armful of hay

over its place, laid ourselves down, and slept very happily till about four o'clock next morning, when one of the party chose to dream that we were lying by the side of a glacier, and he must needs get up to warn us of our danger ! Before we got again to sleep, after this friendly caution, the peasants were stirring below, the children began gabbling, and all was clatter and noise, and no more sleep for the travellers !

CHAPTER VII.

THE GLACIERS.

AN ingenious, though somewhat paradoxical, author asserts that the period of human life spent in travelling may fairly be reckoned at double the length it would count for if spent at rest. We might subscribe to the truth of the remark if, as is probable, the writer merely meant that in a given space of time a person gains twice as much useful experience of the world and its ways, when his understanding and feelings are acted upon by the friction of the external world on a journey, than if they were exposed during the same period to the rust and dust at home. One thing is quite clear, namely, that it will depend essentially on the temperament of the individual, whether the result be a gain or a loss in the balance-sheet of life. Lord Byron, with his mind's eye in a fine frenzy rolling, talks, in his bold and peculiar style, of "curdling a long life into one hour." This is the opposite view of the matter ; and unfortunately for him, poor fel-

low, grand poet though he was, and enjoying a splendid renown, he turned all his experience the wrong way, and by drawing only misery out of his researches, curdled his whole existence into a few bitter hours. For my part, I am not ashamed to own myself a disciple of that school the great master of which "clapped his hands cheerly together," and declared, "that if he were in a desert he would find out wherewith in it to call forth his affections."* In other words, I have found this much abused world a very good sort of a world, both when vegetating, cabbage-fashion, at a fixed point, and when wheeling or sailing along its surface. Grievs and crosses will, no doubt, occur in both cases, but even these, if rightly taken, may be of great use, by preventing the wheels of life from catching fire when our rate of going becomes too great, or prevent their being clogged if we become too languid in our pace.

Be all this, however, as it happens to fall out in the grand tour of existence, there can be no doubt that a day's work amongst the mountains of Switzerland offers an agreeable illustration of the position at the beginning of this chapter, in which it is held that so much more may be seen and done and learned when moving about than when at rest. Nor is the variety of circumstances less than that

* Sterne : Sentimental Journey.

of the scenery. We may pass the morning in a hot climate, under the shade of such rich foliage as that of the baths of St. Gervais ; at noon be labouring ankle-deep in snow on one of the bleakest shoulders of Mont Blanc ; and before night be again springing along a grassy meadow in the temperate depths of an Alpine valley. We may thus breakfast at a sumptuous hotel, in company with the best society of Paris or London ; dine on the summit of a barren rock 10,000 feet above the level of the sea, many a weary league from the nearest habitation of man ; and at the close of the day take our supper with the Savoyard peasantry of a region we have never heard of, speaking a language of which we scarcely understand one word in ten ; and at length be glad to lie down to rest on a pallet of straw, in a hovel which, the day before, we would have considered scurvy lodging for our dog !

It seems admitted by every tourist who has made the journey, that the Allée Blanche, which lies on the southern side of Mont Blanc, forms the most interesting portion of the tour of that great mountain, and in some respects is justly considered one of the most magnificent scenes in all the Alps. Tastes will differ in these matters ; but to my mind, after having crossed and recrossed these grand chains by ten different passes, I continue of my original

opinion, that the view of Mont Blanc, taken in reverse, from the top of the Col de la Seigne lying at the upper extremity of the Allée Blanche, is the grandest thing I am acquainted with in the way of pure mountain scenery, entirely divested of trees or of any sort of verdure, and undecked by anything but snow. Of that, indeed, the part of the mountain, which faces the south-east, has a smaller portion than any other side, chiefly, or I suppose I might say entirely, owing to a circumstance which in another way gives a wonderful degree of magnificence to this particular aspect of the cluster of peaks included in the general term Mont Blanc. I allude to the steepness of the rocks, which, on the side next the Allée Blanche are so very precipitous that no snow lies upon them, much less can it accumulate there. I therefore advise any one who really has a love for these mountains, and wishes to have the means of judging truly of their merits, to make an expedition to the Allée Blanche, either by the route we took over the Col de Bonhomme, or by the easier though somewhat longer way of the Great St. Bernard, Aosta, and Courmayeur, or finally, by the Col de Ferret, from Martigny. Besides this particular view and several others of almost equal magnificence, a trip to the Allée Blanche is well worth while, were it only to see the mighty glaciers of

Miage and Brenva. The glacier of Miage lies near to the top of the valley, between the foot of Mont Blanc and the Col de la Seigne, which is one of its low shoulders. Enormous masses of rock, it is true, are found on that side of the mountain, so precipitous that no snow can lie on them; but there occur also many valleys and many districts of rock of much less steepness, some visible, and some out of sight far up amongst the eternal snows. All these furnish materials out of which the enormous glaciers alluded to are formed in a manner I shall afterwards describe. Of these the most remarkable is the glacier of Miage, which not merely comes all down the side of the mountain, but actually traverses the valley at right angles, dams up the stream flowing along it, and by a long series of deposits of broken rocks, the detritus of the higher ridges of the Alps, forms a huge rampart across the valley several hundred feet high. Above this mighty natural barrier there is collected the lake of Combal, the waste waters of which have no small difficulty in finding their way past this formidable impediment. They are drawn off by a narrow channel lying between the mountains on the south side of the Allée Blanche, and the end of the embankment of rocks deposited by the glacier. The water from this lake mixing with those caused by the melting of the glacier of

Miage, from the commencement of the river Doire, an important feeder of the Po, into which it falls near Turin.

I should not be surprised if some day this lake were to prove too strong for its retaining wall, and to burst its way through, carrying with it the glacier itself in fragments, and the whole of the huge mass of rocks which it now bears quietly on its back. If this were to happen—and I think I saw geological evidence of similar catastrophes having occurred before on that spot, in some past ages of the world—the town of Courmayeur, and of course all the villages on the banks of the Doire, would be swept down to the Adriatic !

In speaking of the *mer-de-glace*, I have mentioned that all, or nearly all, glaciers are surmounted by long ridges of fragments of the rocks cast down upon them by the avalanches. Now it will readily be understood that when a glacier such as that of Miage, though originating in the cold regions at the top, forces its way down to the warm climate of the valleys, all that part of it which consists of ice and snow, when it reaches so far, must in process of time be melted. But in so doing, as the huge moraines or embankments of broken rocks, lying on the top of the glacier, cannot be got rid of in this way, they fall down, in confused heaps, as soon as the ice which supports them disappears. Moreover,

it will be apparent that as the glacier brings down a fresh supply of similar materials every season, and as a considerable portion of these fragments are disengaged every summer by the ice melting, such an accumulation must in time take place as makes the imagination of any one but a stout-hearted geologist giddy. I, at least, cannot conceive that there exists any mortal, male or female, scientific or otherwise, who has the smallest trace of reflection, who could view this extraordinary scene without emotion. I am acquainted with only one other scene in the world which can pretend to rival, in natural magnificence, the glacier de Miage; I mean Niagara, which is, no doubt, even more simple in its grandeur, and being far more beautiful upon the whole, is more pleasing as an object of contemplation. Niagara, like those finished works of Grecian art, such as we may conceive the Elgin marbles to have been when entire, is so perfect as to leave nothing for the imagination to wish for. The glacier of Miage has no pretensions to beauty; on the contrary, it is a sort of monster, whose magnificence is due chiefly to its enormous size, and to the savage variety of its structure, coupled with its utter incongruity with the surrounding scenery. At Niagara everything is smooth, uniform, graceful, and solemn, far beyond the power of any fancy to conceive. Nor can there be any

doubt, I think, that this solemnity is enhanced by the excessive tameness of the flat and uninteresting country adjacent to the Falls, which leaves them, so far as scenery is concerned, in complete solitude, —albeit surrounded by innumerable villages and bridges, each one more ungraceful and unpicturesque than the other,—not to speak of the hideous mills, or “hydraulic powers,” as they are called by the Americans, by which a portion of the cataract is borrowed for the vulgar uses of man.

It is very different indeed, and, fortunately for the picturesque, it ever must remain so, with the stupendous glaciers I am speaking of; and nothing can speak more strongly in favour of their claims to magnificence than the fact of their being able to make any show at all in the company of such mountains as the Alps. I am not sure that even the great Niagara itself could hold its ground by the side of the still more awful Mont Blanc. I wish I could persuade my friend Mr. Burford, the most skilful of panorama painters, to present us with a good view of either the glacier de Miage, or that of Brenva, taken from so short a distance that this characteristic object should form the principal feature in the picture, and not be brought in, as it generally is, as a mere accessory to the mountain scenery.

Few persons, even of those who have repeat-

edly visited Switzerland, and have crossed and recrossed the Alps many times, are aware of the origin, structure, and movements of these singular masses. The accomplished and thoroughly informed Mons. Ebel says, there may be at least four hundred glaciers in number, ranging from three or four to between twenty and thirty miles in length. The depth, he says, is in some only a hundred feet, but in many it is six or seven hundred feet. It is difficult to form an estimate of the ground actually covered by the whole of the glaciers of Switzerland, but Ebel computes that the aggregate area which they occupy, cannot be much less than a hundred and thirty square leagues, which may be taken at about twelve hundred square miles !

In considering this question of glaciers, it is particularly interesting and instructive to bear in mind, that those innumerable icebergs, or huge islands of ice, which float about not merely in the Polar seas, but are frequently drifted into the middle latitudes of the temperate zones of both hemispheres, have all, in their day, been merely glaciers. The only difference between these wandering icebergs and the comparatively fixed glaciers of the Alps, is, that those which have formed the icebergs, must have terminated in valleys opening into the sea; whereas, the others run into valleys terminating on dry land. The glaciers which come down from the Alps of

Savoy, Switzerland, and the Tyrol, on reaching the warm districts below, are gradually melted into the four great rivers of Europe—the Po and the Rhone on the south, the Danube and the Rhine on the north. But the Polar snows, arctic or antarctic, when formed into glaciers of exactly the same description, experience, it would seem, a very different fate, or, to speak more correctly, they run a very different course before they experience exactly the same eventual fate,—that is, to mingle with the ocean. The Polar valleys, so far as we know about them, generally lead at once into seas, the temperature of which is not many degrees above the freezing point; consequently, the melting process goes on so slowly, that when they have been protruded to a sufficient distance from the shore to come within the influence of the tides, or currents, their ends are snapped off, and then they form those floating islands called icebergs. I may remark, in passing, that of all the dangers which harass navigators, these are among the most perplexing; because no efforts of skill, nor any length of experience, can give him a knowledge of their position. In the darkness of the long nights of high latitudes, his utmost care and vigilance, and all his usual resources—his lead, latitude, and look out—often give him no warning of his proximity to these erratic shoals or floating reefs.

The use of the word *erratic* reminds me, that almost every iceberg which ships fall in with, like almost every glacier in the Alps, is covered thick with boulders or masses of stone, from the size of one's hand to that of a house. In the case of the Alpine glaciers, the blocks which they carry along are either quietly deposited amidst the forests, vineyards, and green pastures of the lower valleys, on the melting of the ice; or they may occasionally be hurried along for some miles by such a debacle as that which nearly destroyed Martigny. But in regions nearer the Pole, where the climate, even of the lower districts, is so severe that no such melting process takes place, almost all the materials brought down by the glaciers are carried off to sea. The following passage from Mr. Lyell's invaluable work called *Principles of Geology*, gives a very graphic picture of the manner in which this branch of the disintegration of the earth's surface is carried on.

“In northern latitudes, where glaciers descend into valleys terminating in the sea, great masses of ice, on arriving at the shore, are occasionally detached and floated off, together with their *moraine*. The currents of the ocean are then often instrumental in transporting them to great distances. Scoresby counted five hundred icebergs drifting along in latitude 69° and 70° north, which rose above the surface from the height of one

to two hundred feet, and measured from a few yards to a mile in circumference. Many of these," continues Lyell, "contained strata of earth and stones, or were loaded with beds of rock of great thickness, of which the weight was conjectured to be from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand tons. Such bergs must be of great magnitude, because the mass of ice below the level of the water is between seven and eight times greater than that above. Whenever they are dissolved, it is evident that the *moraine* will fall to the bottom of the sea. In this manner may submarine valleys, mountains, and platforms, become strewed over with scattered blocks of foreign rock, of a nature perfectly dissimilar from all in the vicinity, and which may have been transported across unfathomable abysses. Some ice islands have been known to drift from Baffin's Bay to the Azores, and from the South Pole to the immediate neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope*."

I may add to the above statement, that I have counted thirty such icebergs at one moment, off Cape Horn, and some of them greatly exceeding in size the largest dimension mentioned by Scoresby.

It is curious to observe how these wandering

* Principles of Geology, by Charles Lyell, vol. i. p. 270, 5th Edition.—London, 1837.

masses of rock may be exposed to further transportation by the same causes somewhat varied. Mr. Lyell says: "In the Baltic, large erratic blocks, as well as sand and smaller stones which lie on shoals, are liable every year to be frozen into the ice, where the sea freezes to the depth of five or six feet. On the melting of the snow in spring, when the sea rises about half a fathom, numerous ice islands float away, bearing up these rocky fragments, so as to convey them to a distance; and if they are driven by the waves upon shoals, they may convert them into islands, by depositing the blocks; or if stranded upon low islands, they may considerably augment their height*."

All this is matter of fact and direct observation; but it does not seem difficult to go a step farther, in order to conceive what must take place when the floor of the ocean shall be raised above the surface of the sea by the successive action of volcanic elevations, after the manner in which it is now pretty generally admitted by geologists various parts of the earth's surface are rising. In process of time, the sandy, or gravelly, or muddy, or rocky bed of the sea, will become dry land, on the surface of which will inevitably be found multitudes of boulders or erratic blocks, such as we now observe strewn over the sandy plains of Prussia, and on

* Principles of Geology, vol. ii. p. 289.

the ridges of the Jura;—all of these were probably dropped down from melting icebergs in former epochs of the world's history perhaps not very remote (geologically speaking), floating on the surface of those seas, which, from a variety of other proofs, we know must, at some period or other, have covered Europe*.

A little observation shows, that above a certain elevation, the mountains are covered with eternal snow; and likewise teaches us, that above another level, which varies according to circumstances, snow falls in greater or less quantity during nine months of the year. The accumulation which results from this is so great, that immense masses of snow are, at all times of the year, thrown from the higher ridges into the upper valleys of the Alps. At some seasons these avalanches, as they are called, are

* The celebrated M. Agassiz has lately broached a set of entirely new doctrines respecting the transportation of the multitude of erratic blocks scattered over the sides of the Jura and other ridges of mountains.—See his Discourse pronounced before the Helvetic Society of Natural Sciences at Neufchatel, on the 24th of July, 1837. To give any intelligible account of his theory would require a longer explanation than I can afford room for; but the topic is one which is full of the highest geological interest, and is well worthy the most careful study.

See also a minute and truly philosophical disquisition on the whole topic of glaciers, and on the history of erratic blocks, in Chapter XIII. of Mr. Darwin's Journal, which forms the third volume of Captain Fitzroy's interesting and important Voyage recently published.

much more frequent and extensive than at others. In spring, or just before summer, when the heat of the sun begins to be felt, and after the long winter has deposited its cargo of snow, the avalanches are greatest. These enormous accumulations piled one over another in the Alpine valleys, become partially melted by the heat, but as their mass is much too great to allow of their being entirely dissipated during the short summer of those high regions, they last till winter comes on, when they are frozen into a mass, more or less solid, according to circumstances which I shall presently explain. In those valleys which are most shaded by the ridges of the mountains, the size and progress of the glaciers are very different from what they are in those which are more exposed to the rays of the sun. It must be recollected, too, that the beds of all the upper valleys of Alps are considerably inclined, and that the channels of those ravines, especially, which lie near the very top, are exceedingly steep; the consequence is, that when the successive layers of snow, often several hundreds of feet in thickness, come to be half melted by the sun, and by the innumerable torrents which are poured upon them from every side, to say nothing of the heavy rains of summer, they form a mass, not liquid indeed, but such as has a tendency to move down the highly inclined faces on which they lie, every part of which

is not only well lubricated by running streams resulting from the melting snows on every side, but has been well polished by the friction of ages of antecedent glaciers.

Every summer, a certain but very slow advance is made by these huge, sluggish, slushy, half-snowy, half-icy, accumulations. But when winter comes, all the streams which in summer had flowed under the glaciers, and at their sides, between it and the retaining cliffs, and had served as so much oil to their wheels, are now frozen up, and act the part of glue to bind the enormous masses firmly in the valley. Hence it may be useful to observe, that this very act of freezing, while it contributes essentially to the solidity of the glaciers, and effectually, as I have said, arrests their progress for a season, is one cause of their disruption, by the irresistible, or almost irresistible, expansive force of water at the moment of congelation. Meanwhile, that is during the long winter, fresh snow goes on accumulating above with great rapidity, particularly near the sources of the glaciers; for, like a river, each glacier is generally fed with snow from many different valleys, all eventually meeting in one point. By this means the enormous loads of snow which the glaciers have to support, are annually augmented in size and weight by the time spring comes round again. It will also be easily understood how the

lower portions must be thrust not only further downwards but onwards into the valleys, by the constantly increasing pressure of this vast load of snow. The descent begins the moment the heat is great enough to melt the ice, which has not only cemented the bottoms and sides of the glaciers to the rocks during winter, but has acted the part of a wedge to fix the glacier into its place.

In the hot months, although the actual motion in advance of each separate glacier cannot be perceived, on account of its extreme slowness, yet there are sundry strange, deep-seated noises, and various other symptoms of motion, which may be detected by a little patient observation. During winter, on the other hand, when no movement of any kind is to be perceived, the most profound silence reigns over every part of the glacier. But the moment the warm weather commences, and during the whole course of summer, the glacier is not only in motion, but gives forth sounds, which are exceedingly striking and unlike any others I am acquainted with. If we listen attentively we can always hear some sounds—often like that of distant thunder caused by the ice breaking across from side to side—these sounds are generally accompanied by a kind of faint, earthquake sensation. At others, we can hear a sort of mysterious groaning produced by some unseen, internal mass giving way, or per-

haps by pieces rolling into the numerous vaults, scooped out by the running water which insinuates itself into the glacier on all sides, eating out its very vitals! We are sure also, at such seasons, to distinguish, almost without interruption, the noise of avalanches, more or less distant: but these sounds afford no evidence of the glacier itself being in motion. There is, however, one very palpable symptom of its locomotion, which I have often watched with singular interest. It is only necessary, when on the top of a glacier, to place yourself by the side of one of those long ridges of broken stones called moraines, already alluded to, and to fix the attention to that part of the bank which is nearest. Many minutes seldom elapse before some one or more of the fragments detaches itself and rolls down; or a tremulous motion, of the glacier itself, imparts a slight shake in the whole mass of rubbish, and causes a faint grinding sound amongst its parts, which is abundantly significant.

But the most obvious of all the proofs of the progression of the glacier, is the manner in which its enormous snout ploughs up the ground before it. Of this strange process we had an opportunity of examining a remarkable instance in the lower part of the Allée Blanche, where the glacier de Brenva falls into the valley, overturning and destroying everything before it, and having fairly crossed from

one side to the other, a distance of a mile at least, is so irresistibly pressed onwards by the enormous weight of snow on its shoulders, high up the sides of Mont Blanc, that its lower end, on reaching the opposite side of the valley, actually travels for a considerable distance up the bank! So complete a barricade was formed by the glacier at one place, that we found some difficulty in getting past; for though the road, purposely contrived to be out of the reach of such accidents, had been carried forty or fifty feet in perpendicular height above the bottom of the valley, it was all rubbed away by the glacier having slowly climbed up to it. The guides pointed out the corners of green fields peeping out from the sides of the glacier in the middle of the valley, and showed us traces of walls and fences which had belonged to large villages, now entirely obliterated by the moving mass! I took notice of one circumstance which told the fatal story very well. We had walked along a well-worn footpath till our course was abruptly stopped by the edge of the glacier; but, on crossing over it, we re-discovered our footpath, which had been quite hidden by the intervening mass. In like manner, the river Doire, which takes its rise from the lake formed by the glacier de Miage, a few leagues higher up the Allée Blanche, finds its way partly through, and partly under the ice, and dashing along an archway or tunnel, which it has

scooped out for itself, sweeps past Courmayeur in grand style.

By means of observations made in the different parts of the Alps, it has been ascertained, that the progressive motion of the different glaciers, respectively, varies very much. In the valley of Chamouni, Ebel states, that they advance at about fourteen feet in a year. In that of Grindelwald, the glaciers move rather faster, being at the rate of twenty-five feet in the year. But, as he says, it is impossible to give any rule as applicable to these phenomena, since, independently of the variety caused by the different degrees in inclination in the surface of the ground in the lower valleys, and the nature and extent of the mountains which furnish the materials of the glacier, there must be taken into account the fluctuations in the seasons themselves. In some winters, it would appear, much more snow falls than in others; and in some summers, the heat is found to be greater than usual; consequently, the travelling process at the lower extremity of the glacier is increased or diminished.

Owing chiefly to these causes, it may happen that a glacier will actually diminish for several years in succession; that is, the lower extremity, which has been extending itself year after year into the fertile part of the valley no longer gains,

but on the contrary, loses so much more by melting in summer than it gains by the fresh snows of winter that it abandons, or leaves uncovered, a portion of the ground it had previously occupied. There is no doubt that during those summers in which the glacier becomes shorter, there has as usual been a progressive motion, but this has not been sufficiently great to make up for the loss of ground caused by the extra melting. In other years, again, the augmentation of snow is so large that numerous meadows heretofore deemed safe, and even rising grounds, which had been cultivated in security from all time within the memory of man, now invaded and utterly destroyed! It is generally in the spring that these rapid advances are made, probably at the first moment when the cohesion of the mass to the sides of the valley is so far weakened by the heat as to give way before the pressure from above caused by the whole winter's deposit of fresh snow. It has been remarked, too, that when any extraordinary movement in advance has been made by a glacier in a particular season, it is observed to decrease for several years successively afterwards. M. Ebel supposes that this arises from the upper valleys having given off suddenly so large a portion of their mass that it requires the accumulation of several years' snows to set the glacier in motion again, during which interval the heat

of several successive summers acts powerfully in diminishing the length of the lower extremity.

It is exceedingly interesting, in going from glacier to glacier in the Alps, to observe the great differences by which their surfaces are distinguished. When the bottom of the valley along which they travel is not much inclined, and the direction straight, the glacier also is smooth at top, and is scarcely marked with cracks. But when the inclination of the ground is great, and its surface uneven, the upper face of the glacier is all broken across by huge rents called "crevasses," while ridges, sometimes a hundred feet in height, are formed at the top, giving to the whole not a little the appearance of a stormy sea when agitated by a current running in a direction opposite to that of the wind. I have myself seen appearances not unlike those of some glaciers, in a north-west gale of wind off the Cape of Good Hope, when the well-known current from the eastward has been setting strong in the teeth of the breeze, across the great bank of Lagulhas.

Sometimes the surface of a glacier is of the purest white, but this degree of purity is rare, and occurs only when the upper valleys, which supply its snows, are not flanked by cliffs which, when acted upon by avalanches, are broken in pieces, and scattered in fragments over the subjacent

snow. Generally speaking, their surface is covered either with huge blocks of stone or with mud and sand, the result of the friction of these fragments against one another, or by their being ground into powder between the glacier and the sides of the valleys through which they pass. A number of fantastic appearances are often to be observed in passing over a glacier, of which I shall mention one which struck me as being very curious. On the top of a pyramid of ice a mass of granite was lying in a horizontal position, its length being between thirty and forty feet, and its thickness eight or ten. The stone had evidently acted as an umbrella, in keeping off the sun's rays from the ice upon which it rested; so that while the adjacent surface of the glacier was melted, and its general level lowered, that portion which had enjoyed the protection of the overhanging mass of rock remained, till its elevation above the rest had reached the height of twenty or thirty feet. It was clear, however, that a very small degree of melting on one side or the other would topple the stone down, and leave the pyramid without its protecting stone cap. Of these we saw great numbers, from which the stones had long fallen down, and been lost in the crevasses. At all events, they were no longer to be seen.

I hardly know, in short, anything respecting

which, in cruising about amongst the Alps, we acquire a greater degree of what may be called progressive interest than in the glaciers; and I have dwelt upon them longer than I had at first intended, from a wish to call the attention of Alpine travellers who may have more leisure than I had, to their great variety and singular characteristics, which I am certain will amply repay the labour of the research. At first sight, a real glacier may often be mistaken for a mere mass of snow, from its having neither rents nor elevated pinnacles, nor any abrupt cliffs at its sides; whereas it may have been urged down from the higher valleys of the Alps into a situation where it looks like an ordinary collection of snow lying on the spot where it fell. On the other hand, as Ebel points out, an accumulation of snow covered with a thin crust of ice may sometimes be mistaken for a true glacier. It is only by means of the crevasses and by the angular breaks which betray its real structure, that these singular masses can be identified.

A beautiful green, and occasionally a blue tinge, can be seen in their cracks from a great distance; but on a more close inspection this disappears. The ice also of which a glacier is made up, is found to be different from that formed in lakes, being composed of grains, or pieces several inches in length—full of cracks and bubbles of air—and

so arranged as to allow of a certain degree of movement, or play of the pieces upon one another, without breaking. M. Ebel thinks this extraordinary structure is caused by the presence of the air disengaged from the masses of snow saturated with water, in the process of its congelation into ice. I do not exactly understand this explanation, but it is easy to conceive that there must be an immense quantity of air included in the successive masses of snow which go to make up the glacier; and that this air having no means of escape when the snow, after being partially melted, is again frozen so as to become ice, may essentially modify the internal structure of the glacier. The irresistible expansion also, which takes place in the great quantity of water included in every glacier, at the moment of freezing, must cause, by the enlargement of its bulk, a variety of modifications in a mass of such vast weight and dimensions; especially when it is not only pressed upon by mountains of snow on its top, but is resisted by cliffs of solid rock at its sides. Accordingly, solid and transparent ice is found only at particular spots where the freezing process has room to act freely.

Ebel says that the only exception he knows to this rule occurs in the glacier of Rosboden, which, as it lies close to the village on the top of the Simplon's pass, ought to be more visited than it is by

travellers taking that popular route. The moraines also which stretch along this singular glacier are of unusual magnitude, and the whole is described as being well worthy of attention. Its most remarkable peculiarity, he tells us, is the unique circumstance of its being entirely composed of a compact field of bluish-green ice, which gives it the appearance of a solid mass of crystal, quite different from that of any other glacier in the Alps.

CHAPTER VIII.

AOSTA AND THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

As nothing is further from my present intention than writing a road-book, I shall skip lightly over the Alps, after traversing the Allée Blanche, and returning from Savoy into Switzerland by Aosta, and the pass of the Great St. Bernard. I am the more disposed to do this, as I had an opportunity of visiting both these places, on a subsequent occasion, under circumstances of more variety. The classical interest of Aosta is derived chiefly from the ruins of an amphitheatre and of a triumphal arch of Augustus. The name of the town, the etymologists tell us, has evidently been corrupted from the Roman title Augusta Prætoria; and though, of course, on going to Italy I met with a thousand ancient buildings more worthy of attention than those at Aosta, I shall never forget them, from their being the first of their kind with which I fell in, early in life too, when the young fancy was fully awake to their interest.

Long afterwards, when my curiosity had been fully saturated with such things, I came back to this humble spot with somewhat of the feeling with which we prepare to meet an old friend from whom we have been separated many years. I do not know how it is with others, but certainly it has been my good fortune to find that time, instead of deteriorating, generally improves both things and people in the interval. At all events, such was the effect of experience on the ruins of Aosta, of which there are two specimens, and I recommend no one to pass them by without examination. One is a bit of a huge wall built of those enormous stones so characteristic of the days in which every architectural work seems to have been constructed as if intended to last for ever. The other is a triumphal arch, with sundry traces of very pretty work about it, especially in the mouldings; the whole having about it a genuine air. Both these remains have existed since the time of Augustus Cæsar almost uninjured by anything except the scythe of Time, which has picked a few holes in them.

It is to be presumed, I think, whenever we see a monument which has been preserved for a long course of centuries, that the materials are of no earthly use to any one, otherwise they would have been carried off long ago by the inhabitants, who care for these things only so far as their destruction

may yield them materials for the advancement of their own selfish objects. On this account, if it were wished to erect a monument to endure through all ages, it should be made—not of brass or marble, nor even of freestone—but of the most shapeless stones we could pick up, broken bricks, old bottles, in short, of all sorts of despised rubbish we could lay our hands upon. We should, of course, endeavour, either by the grandeur of the dimensions, or by the beauty of the form, to give it that dignity which is generally sought for through the agency of the valuable materials of which it is made, but which, unfortunately for their durability, bear upon them, in their very nature, as legibly as if the words were carved upon them, “Come and steal me !”

A small incidental circumstance occurred at Aosta, which is so far interesting as it shows the working of natural feelings, as well as natural causes, in places where we are apt at times to fancy such things do not exist, especially when we are provoked. Owing to some blunder on the part of our guides, or more probably on ours, though we threw it on them, we had left the Swiss territory, and entered that of Piedmont, without having duly provided ourselves with passports, and in consequence we had been detained most inconveniently at the frontier. After much delay and trouble, and some ex-

pense, we received a provisional permission, as it was called, to proceed as far as Aosta, where, if the commanding-officer of the troops thought fit, after examining us, to let us proceed, well and good; otherwise we were to be sent back into Switzerland, and our tour of Mont Blanc cut short.

Having been stopped at a very incommodious inn, near the bottom of the Italian side of the pass of the Great St. Bernard, we were glad to move away from it at four o'clock, in the most unpropitious of mornings, with all the mountain-tops wrapped in clouds, and the mist flying about amongst the lower hills and valleys in the wildest whirls, cutting against our faces at the corners, and though no rain fell, the dreary dampness rendered our progress anything but agreeable. After descending the mountain, for about five or six hundred perpendicular feet, we gradually emerged from the thick part of the clouds, and got sight of the rich and beautiful valley of Aosta at our feet, matted thickly with vines, and decked here and there with numerous old castles standing out from among grand walnut and other forest trees. While breakfast was getting ready, I stepped to the general's office, where I learned nothing satisfactory, being merely informed that not only I but all my family party must present themselves—an

order which, however much it discomposed me, enchanted my little girl, who professed such a passion for adventures, that I believe she would have been delighted had we all been arrested as spies or political agitators, and laid by the heels in a Sardinian dungeon.

I do not think, indeed, that we should have met with any serious detention, or any detention at all, had it not been for the unlucky circumstance of our being preceded by a party of Frenchmen, who, I have not the least doubt, were as innocent of any evil designs against the Sardinian government as we were. They had set out so long before us from the Hospice at the top of the Great St. Bernard to make the very tour of Mont Blanc which we were projecting, that I imagined they must have gone at least half the distance, when I again met them in the waiting-room of the commanding-officer at Aosta—filled with very impotent, and I thought indiscreet, wrath, at their detention. With extremely long faces, and many dangerous interjections, they informed me that they had been stopped in consequence of a very trifling irregularity in their papers. I kept my own secret; but I could not help feeling some uneasiness when I learned the small grounds of their detention, knowing that the irregularity in my own documents was much greater than it was in theirs.

It happened, unfortunately for these gentlemen, that there raged at that moment (for I now speak of 1835) two violent diseases in Piedmont,—first, the cholera, and secondly, the fear of a political plot, said to have been excited by French agents. I verily believe there was but little grounds for apprehension in either case, but by their joint action on the imaginations of the poor Piedmontese, they excited such a degree of fermentation in the country that the slightest circumstance was enough to blow them up into an ecstasy of fear. One of these men, out of pure dandyism, and in total unconsciousness of its unseemly disfigurement, wore enormous mustachios, whiskers, and, round all, such a beard as might have attracted notice anywhere, but which under the feverish state of politico-choleric excitement of the Piedmontese at once led to the suspicion of his being a military man. He denied stoutly that he was a soldier, and accordingly was just about to be dismissed when some one discovered that on his waistcoat he wore an unknown and very alarming kind of button, having a couple of anchors crossed on it. It was in vain he asserted that this was the uniform of a rowing club on the lake of Geneva, for the mere word “club” appeared to stir up in the functionary’s mind such a host of revolutionary reminiscences that we all began to fear it would go

hard with the unhappy and hairy dandy. At length, after a long and worrying examination, the party were allowed to proceed, upon the express condition that in four days at furthest they should quit Savoy, —a period barely sufficient, in fine weather, for them to hurry over the ground they had proposed to themselves the pleasure of visiting at leisure.

With such a specimen of needless rigour before us, we had scarcely any expectation that we should be enabled to pass muster, and fully made up our minds to be ordered back again. While waiting, therefore, in the Hall of Justice, I took the opportunity of sounding the porter as to the character of the person who was to decide our fate, and whose dictum was either to force us to retrace our steps or to allow us to proceed on the journey. Among other points I discovered that the commanding officer had a son at sea in the Sardinian navy; and though, I confess, I had not been previously aware of the existence of any such navy, I stored up the fact, and when my turn came on, took an early opportunity of letting my military judge become aware of my nautical rank and quality.

I could see the father's eye at first brighten, and then soften, as he thought of his far-away child at sea; and I felt, from that moment, pretty sure how the affair would turn. Yet the general was too old a soldier to let his motives be seen even, perhaps, by himself; and after delicately re-

minding me that I was quite “out of règle,” said with a smile, he also would venture to put himself “out of règle,” by giving me a provisional passport, on condition that I would pledge my word as an officer to return it to him by post, after it had served my purpose.

This settled, we fell into more familiar conversation ; and on my alluding to the French party who had gone before us, he smiled, shook his head, and denied that his chief difficulties had sprung either from the young gentleman’s mustachios, still less from his anchor buttons, and least of all from the trivial irregularity in his passport, but mainly to the circumstance of he and his companions being French. “ They love plots and sedition,” added the old man, “ on their own account. You English kick up a row sometimes, and give the continental authorities no small trouble, but as you talk without the least reserve, we know everything you think and wish to do, and can guard against mischief if any be intended. But as for these merry Frenchmen, who, if you would believe them, are the most harmless and least interfering of mortals, and who are quite settled and happy at home, and who, innocent lambs ! never dream of stirring up discontent in other states ; I make a rule—yes, sir, I make a rule—to get them quietly out of the country as fast as I possibly can.”

This seems rather hard on the French, but certainly it is the established habit of the English to blame everything near them, and to praise everything absent, especially if far away. When at home they decry all that is English, and laud all that is foreign; but the moment they set foot abroad the tables are turned; from thenceforward no country is like England—none is tolerable on the Continent. The rule of their talk seems to be simply this: condemn what is present, or near, at the avowed expense of what is remote and out of reach. It need not be mentioned how much this provokes the natives; but still it is rather comical how little they are really influenced by what is said of them. In Italy this constitutional trick which the English have of abusing the government of Austria, and all the authorities high and low, is so general that it absolutely goes for nothing. Whereas, if strangers belonging to any other nation were to give half as much licence to their tongues, they would speedily be imprisoned or sent out of the country. To serve the English, however, in this way would be to banish them “*en masse*,” for they all talk out and abuse, and the people would deprive themselves of their best, because their richest visitors, who are not less free with their cash than with their calumnies. Calumny, indeed, is rather too strong a word to use in speaking of the reckless good humour with which the English consider

it a sort of national duty when abroad to reprobate every custom of every country they visit, merely because it happens to differ in some respects from their own; though, when pushed, they generally acknowledge that they know little or nothing of the circumstances upon which the distinctions are based.

It may often happen, too, that their censure is not a calumny, but is just; and this may render the free talk of the English still more annoying to the despotic rulers, under whose very noses our friend John Bull delights in spouting his treason, in the openest manner he can. If he could only speak the languages of the countries he passes through, and of which he thus mercilessly vilifies the government, he might be thought a dangerous fellow to trust at large; and still more so if he could write the languages—a degree of proficiency which he very seldom even aims at. Fortunately for master John's head, his lingo—spoken as well as written—is a dead language to the natives; while, at the same time, nothing is more universally intelligible than the jingling of the ready cash in his pockets. The result, accordingly, is, that the inhabitants soon relax their frowns into smiles, and cheerfully accept the kicks which he gives their government, in consideration of the halfpence which he gives themselves.

As I walked home after the interview with the governor, I could not help commenting in my own mind on the idle prejudices of the Sardinian authorities; but while thus liberally engaged, I caught myself acting under the influence of the self-same spirit. Having learned that the French party were going to the inn called the "Ange," I resolved to go to the "Union;" for, with the ready selfishness of the world, I wished to steer clear of any intercourse with suspected persons—though I knew them to be perfectly innocent!

As the cholera morbus had entered, or was supposed to have entered, Savoy, no sooner had we reached the hotel than a printed paper was thrust into our hands, containing popular instructions against this scourge. I wish I had room to translate the whole, as it contains not only the best description of that fierce malady, but some of the best instructions how to encounter it. It must be owned, however, that the symptoms of its approach therein given are so numerous, and of such frequent occurrence, that we more than half fancied we were struck with the disease, on reading the paper. Some of the precautionary measures are amusing enough. One of them runs thus: "Keep yourselves very clean, and whenever your body is otherwise wash it presently. At all events, wash your hands, face, and mouth every morning!" The

writer is also very eloquent on the subject of inebriety, but being sorely perplexed between the opposite dangers of “eau de vie” and “eau pure” he makes a compromise by saying that a slight touch of wine (*une teinture*), or of vinegar, or of spirits may be added to the native fluid, winding up with the useful words, “*Malheur à celui qui n’est pas sobre !*” His next precept is graphic and picturesque enough. “Seek,” says he, “for mental tranquillity in moderate occupations, and confidently trust that the elevation of your mountains—the refreshing breezes which sweep daily through your valleys, and the precautionary measures above alluded to, will exempt you from this visitation. Unhappy, too,” he adds, “will that man be who forgets his religious duties, and has not faith in the goodness of Providence !” The whole winds up with rather a sinking after these solemn appeals. “Take care,” says he, “should the cholera come amongst us that you avoid all junkettings, and useless gossiping parties. Do not suffer beggars, pedlars, or persons you know nothing about to enter your houses; and either tie up or kill every dog and every cat in your possession, as they may possibly import the contagion for your neighbourhood.” Why, life would be scarcely worth possessing if people were not only not to visit nor be visited—but not even to allow their cats and dogs to hold intercourse !

Far up in the clouds, and well above these imaginary terrors, we found the excellent monks of the Great St. Bernard plying their generous and truly public-spirited calling. I believe our chief object in this part of our expedition was to see the celebrated dogs, whose exploits amongst the snows of winter have endeared them to every one's childish recollections. Indeed, I do not suppose there are any quadrupeds alive more *fêté* than these fine animals, and it gives one a good idea of the Christian spirit of these worthy priests to observe the indulgent manner in which they submitted to the undisguised interest shown by every guest in the dogs more than for them.

I have met with monks possessed of piety, good nature, learning, intelligence, and active benevolence, in various parts of the world; and I have seen countries in which they formed, almost exclusively, the educated class, but I have nowhere seen men of this stamp so thoroughly devoted to the service of mankind, as the good fathers of St. Bernard. Their Hospice or Convent being placed at the height of somewhat more than eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, is, I believe, the highest inhabited spot in Europe. Their winter lasts generally nine months of every year, and is called a fine season when it extends only to eight. During many of these months their thermometer

stands steadily below zero of our scale, and it is reckoned that there are seldom above ten or twelve good days, with a tolerably clear sky, in the whole year. It is also said, that there is not a morning, even in summer, in which there is not either hail, snow, or rain, and generally all three, added to dense and piercing fogs, and almost a perpetual gale of wind. A pleasant climate !

Notwithstanding all this, the monks, of whom there are generally between twenty and thirty stationed at the Hospice, disperse themselves daily during winter along the roads leading both ways across the pass, and accompanied by their faithful dogs, risk their lives, and, of course, every chance of comfort, in quest of travellers lost and famishing in the snow. The dogs, which, as every one knows, have baskets of provisions tied to them, are so admirably trained in this office of active charity, that they often trace out and rescue from destruction persons whom their masters could never have reached. In this way an immense number of passengers are annually saved from death, and are carefully tended in the convent. Moreover, as they are frequently reduced by sickness, they are skilfully treated by these kind men, some of whom, for this express purpose, have studied medicine.

It may well be asked what takes people across such a pass at such a time, but it is obvious that

some intercourse must be kept up in spite of this formidable barrier between the opposite sides of the Alps—between Geneva and Aosta for instance, not to speak of the numerous other towns and villages which have intimate relations with one another. And as the three, or at the very most, four months of tolerable weather in the year, would never suffice to maintain the requisite degree of communication, the best passes of the mountains are selected and used by the inhabitants. Of these, the Great St. Bernard, for various reasons which I forget, is considered one of the most open and available for foot-passengers; while that of the Simplon, though it is considered the best for carriages, is much too circuitous for the places above alluded to,—namely, those of Savoy and Piedmont in the south, and Geneva, Lausanne, Martigny, and all the valley of the upper Rhone, in the north.

But besides these business-travellers, as they may be called, who are absolutely required to cross the mountains for the purpose of keeping up the intercourse between the high countries on the north, and the low countries on the south sides of the Alps, there is another class of persons who visit the Hospice and taste its hospitality, not indeed in the winter season, but like butterflies, in the brief summer allotted to those wild regions. I allude to amateur travellers—ladies and gentlemen, with their

children and attendants, from every nation in Europe and America. These, under the generic name of Cockneys, flock to the Great St. Bernard in great numbers, and without that being any part of their object, essentially contribute to the maintenance of the establishment. The worthy monks, who do everything out of a spirit of the purest charity, derive no reward from their unceasing exertions except what springs from an internal consciousness of rectitude and of arduous duties well performed. But as the funds of their order are small, and their expenditure very considerable, since they have to send many leagues for every billet of wood and loaf of bread, it would not be possible for them, were they not assisted by the more wealthy travellers, to give that assistance to the poorer class of passengers, which is the main purpose of their institution. It is inconsistent with their principles and practice to make demands upon any one; but it is hoped that this reserve or delicacy on their part never prevents a traveller who has enjoyed the advantage of their hospitality from contributing to the maintenance of an establishment, without which not only all pleasure in the excursion would be at an end, but all power of passing over the mountain at that point would be done away with. Accordingly a box is placed in the chapel, into which travellers may drop such

sums as they feel disposed, or can afford, to contribute to this singular species of charity ; and it is understood that no one gives less than would be charged at an inn anywhere else ; on the contrary somewhat more, inasmuch as every mouthful he eats, costs the inhabitants of the top of the mountain at least double of what it would on the plain. It is the same with every item in the lodging as well as the boarding, for how can linen be dried in such a situation ? It may be washed, ready enough, but when the sun is scarcely ever visible, and fuel becomes as precious to the monks as it is to seamen on a long voyage, the difficulty is greatly increased ; and the cost of sending such things backwards and forwards must all be taken into account.

I remember, on the first visit I made to the Great St. Bernard, in 1818, being greatly pleased with the courteous manners of the Prior, an intelligent and scientific man, who, from having lived much in the world, well knew the charms of society. Nevertheless, from a sense of duty he had devoted himself to this laborious office, and though he certainly won the gratitude, as well as the respect, of every person who passed that way, he must have been sustained in the execution of his protracted and dreary task by something more solid than the transient and often too empty applause of this

world. The same generous assiduity to minister to the wants of every one who claimed the hospitality of the convent, appeared to pervade the whole household, and I cannot recall to mind having any where met with so much genuine attention as in this solitary Hospice.

We took a sunrise walk with the Prior, accompanied by three of his principal dogs; and listened with an interest I cannot describe to his account of the manner in which he and his brethren, assisted by these faithful attendants, hunted among the snow for fainting passengers during the long and dreary winter. He pointed out to us many scenes of suffering and of death; some where the dogs had succeeded in carrying provisions to persons too much exhausted to walk further, but who were instantly sought for by the monks on the dogs returning with their empty baskets, and appealing for further assistance. It would appear that these noble animals enter fully into the spirit of this singular species of hunting—in which the object is to save—not to destroy; and that their natural sagacity is so sharpened by long practice and careful training, that a sort of language is established between them and their masters, by which mutual communications are made, such as few persons living in situations of less constant and severe trial can have any just conception of.

I remember hearing Sir Walter Scott say, that he would believe anything of a St. Bernard dog, and certainly if half the stories told us are true, this eulogium is not exaggerated. I have sometimes wondered that, amidst all the odd freaks which come into the heads of English travellers, it has not occurred to any one to pass a month or two in the depth of winter on the summit of this pass. I feel sure that the current incidents of the day would furnish admirable sport, with the superadded advantage of a highly-exciting and praiseworthy purpose.

Our intelligent guide was not satisfied with telling us of the exploits of his people and his dogs, but gave us an occasional lecture on the geology of the pass, and what was more interesting, on the meteorology to which he was exposed. But all these topics faded in their interest, when he came to describe what he had witnessed of the operations of Buonaparte, when he crossed the Alps between the 15th and the 21st of May 1800, with his army of reserve, consisting of 30,000 men. The first Consul was accompanied by a due proportion of cavalry and cannon, all of which were passed over, not certainly with ease, but with that assured confidence, which, by its success, no doubt contributed to the military spirit so conspicuously displayed a few weeks afterwards on the plains of Marengo. It probably was

from some notion of this connexion between one kind of military success and another, that Napoleon ordered the body of General Desaix, who was killed in that battle, to be carried up and interred in the chapel of the Hospice, on the very top of the Great St. Bernard—thus linking, as it were, across the Alps, the chain of renown by which his glory and that of his army were held together in the eyes of Europe.

From the monument of Desaix, the Prior led us to a little chapel, situated rather lower than the convent, on the eastern side of the building, and in which were ranged the bodies of the unfortunate wretches who had either perished in the snow, or been brought too late to the house of refuge. As the rigorous nature of the climate preserves these bodies for a long time, their features may be distinguished, it is said, for several years. I cannot say that I should have been able to recognise any friend of mine even amongst the best preserved of these Alpine mummies; while the greater number were reduced to mere skeletons. I could not learn what was the precise object of this unpleasant exposure; but I rather suspect it has for its purpose, chiefly to inspire caution on the part of travellers; and perhaps to keep alive the sympathy of those upon whose contributions the existence of the establishment depends. At all events, both these effects

were produced in my mind by the sight. I firmly resolved, in the first place, to avoid passing the Alps in winter; and, in the next, I slipped an extra five-franc piece into the box, over and above what I had already given before this walk.

The venerable Prior pointed out to us the site upon which Napoleon intended to erect a temple, of the Doric order of architecture, to commemorate his Italian campaigns. The number of the pillars at the side was to have been seventy, and at the end fifty; the height of each being one hundred feet! It is uncertain whether or not Buonaparte ever seriously contemplated the erection of this cyclopean building—but assuredly he was guided by a nobler and better taste in limiting the architectural memorials of his great exploit to the simple tomb of Desaix—his brother in arms.

For the rest, it is clear that no position could have been worse selected for such a building, if the intention was to produce an impression of sublimity by means of its magnitude, for even the smallest of the adjacent Alps is twenty thousand times larger, and essentially more magnificent, than any building which even Buonaparte, aided by his grand army, could have erected had they employed all their energies on that one object.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GEMMI PASS AND THE BATHS OF LEUK.

ONE of the greatest charms of Swiss society, or at all events of the society of Geneva—for with that only am I acquainted—is the endless variety and fresh interest in their conversation, when speaking of the glorious mountain scenery of their country, and dwelling in detail on the singular circumstances which flow out of their peculiar position. On a level plain, like that of Lombardy, a correspondent flatness of intellect may be observed, and a want of interest in the topics discussed; whereas at Geneva nothing ever flags. The result accordingly is, that this small city, the capital of the smallest civilised state in Europe, has turned out more distinguished scientific and literary men, and now possesses more, than any other in the world—due allowance being made for the relative population. If the Genevese had only one mountain or one valley to talk about, this intense love of their country, and sensitive admira-

tion of its beauties, might soon degenerate into trifling, as we often see happen in places where the objects of admiration being few, the inhabitants generally become bores to all who fall within range of their fire. But the Alps are so boundless, that the most cultivated understanding, and the warmest taste for what is pleasing in nature, or the most curious in the moral combinations which the physical arrangements of the globe produce on human character, have ample subject for useful as well as agreeable speculations without end. I remember, for example, at a party at Geneva, hearing the celebrated De Candolle, on his return from a trip to the eastward, describe the baths of Pfeffers; and although every member of the company had so repeatedly traversed the Alps that it might be supposed they were all familiar with everything they contained, there was not one person present who did not feel and acknowledge that most of the circumstances which the Professor brought forward were as full of new interest as if none of the party had ever visited those mountains.

It is impossible, indeed, to become tired of the Alps, or even to become so familiar with them as to hear with indifference anything respecting them. In the case alluded to, no doubt the topic had not only its own intrinsic interest to stand upon, but was beholden to the skill of the narrator for its chief effect,

which consisted not merely in the correctness of his drawing, but in the charm of his brilliant colouring, and the thousand and one incidental circumstances which genius alone, combined with extensive knowledge, knows how to bring effectively into any picture. It is no great wonder, I acknowledge, that a man like De Candolle—certainly one of the greatest botanists in the world, and, consequently, the person most accustomed to keep his eyes open to everything around him—should be able to invest any subject he took in hand with that peculiar eloquence which the study of nature in such regions is well fitted to inspire in a mind so gifted. But the point of importance for those who are merely passing through the country to consider is, that independently of these personal advantages, the whole scenery of Switzerland is so essentially fertile in characteristic topics, that, like Sindbad the sailor in the valley of diamonds, they have only to pick them up. To polish and set them as they deserve may require the hand of a De Candolle, but the brilliants are there for the tamest or least imaginative observer to appropriate, if he will.

At all events I should recommend no one, whether gifted with imagination or not, whose course takes him up the valley of the Rhone, to pass unheeded the baths of Leuk, which lie at the distance of only five pithy leagues (*“cinq fortes*

lieues," as the guide-books have it) from the village of Sierre; still less should he miss seeing the extraordinary pass of the Gemmi, by which a short cut is opened across the hills to the lake of Thun, and so to Berne.

It was late on a summer's evening during the first visit I paid to Switzerland in 1818, when we arrived at Leuk, and having walked the greater part of the way along a steep and very rough road, we were glad to get housed anywhere; though, unfortunately, we came too late for the *table-d'hôte* supper,—a mishap which, from the excessive difficulty, and exorbitant price, of getting anything in that part of the world, except at fixed hours, I counsel every one to avoid, especially as all experience shows that the finest scenery on earth looks trashy and uninteresting on an empty stomach.

Next morning at half-past five we commenced our preparations for ascending the pass of the Gemmi, unquestionably one of the most curious artificial roads in Switzerland. Most people after leaving Geneva sweep along the south side of the lake, enter the gorge of the Rhone, stop to dine or breakfast next day at Martigny, then hurry up the Valais to Brieg, impatient to cross the Simplon, and still more impatient to get into Italy. But, as I said before, they would do well to turn off at Leuk or at Sierre,

in order to see this wonderful specimen of road-making.

The fine weather, which had favoured us so much during our tour of Mont Blanc, seemed so completely gone that the people of the hotel endeavoured to dissuade us from attempting the Gemmi pass in such weather. But we were resolved to proceed, and away we went. Unfortunately for me I could not walk a single step, having hurt my foot when scrambling the day before along the scene of the great debacle, extending from St. Branchier to Martigny. In this dilemma, the landlord declared that I might ride up the pass, and be carried down again in a chair on men's shoulders. I agreed to anything rather than miss the sight, and after a hearty breakfast proceeded. We soon reached the base of the mountain, but though the clouds cleared away from time to time, we could see nothing in the least degree like a pass or road of any kind. No valley or ravine appeared to afford an opening through the mountain, the face of which, on approaching still nearer, we discovered to be not merely steep but actually perpendicular, and in some places even overhanging, in cliffs of six and seven hundred feet high ! At the foot of this sheer precipice there lay, as usual, in such places, a sloping *talus*, as it is called, of fragments of the rock detached from the upper

strata. We had to make our way up this bank along a road much steeper than anything we had yet encountered. But this was nothing at all to what we came to on reaching the abrupt face of the cliff, where, to our great surprise, we found the road—even now scarcely visible—actually cut into the perpendicular wall of the mountain, and leading by a series of zig-zags up to the very top.

As these open galleries are excavated in the living rock only to the depth of five or six feet,—and as in many places no parapet has been left on the outer side, while the plane of the road, instead of sloping inwards, rather inclines outwards—it is not in the imagination to conceive anything more terrific. Even to a person on foot, it must require him to possess no small steadiness to retain his composure ; but if mounted, he must have a head well practised in going aloft not to feel very uneasy.

I found my early nautical habits barely sufficient to keep me from becoming giddy, as the mule—the perversest brute in Switzerland—insisted upon pacing along the outer edge of the precipice, instead of hugging the inner wall, as I wished it to do. In actual fear of my neck, I got off several times ; but my foot had been so badly chafed in the Val de Bagnes, I could not get along, and was obliged to remount and take my chance, my only consolation being to recall as many stories as I could muster of

the proverbial sure-footedness of the Swiss mules. We had ascended but a little way before we entered the clouds, which hung low on the mountains. But this obscurity—for we lost sight of the abyss below and the cliffs above—added considerably to the feeling of danger, to say nothing of the discomfort of a drizzling rain. By-and-by the rain became sleet, and before we reached the top it turned to snow. As the thermometer stood only a few degrees below the freezing point, the cold might have been tolerable had it been calm, but it blew so fiercely, that the chill pierced us to the very bone. This, no doubt, was partly owing to the actual severity of the weather, but partly to the contrast between the temperature we now experienced, and that in which we had been basking for the preceding fortnight.

At the top of the mountain all Nature lay before us, bare, and bleak. The cold, black, dripping, unpicturesque rocks, showed themselves every now and then as the clouds flew past. Here and there the ground was dusted with the cutting snow, blown in our faces as we passed on to the gloomy lake of Daube, the waters of which—not less black than ink—lashed themselves into a dirty foam against the base of some dreary cliffs, of which the tops were covered with glaciers. It must certainly have been to some such hopeless spot as this, on the top of

the Caucasus, that the magician in the Arabian Nights carried his victims; and right glad we were when our despotic guide, for once fairly beaten back, made the signal to put about.

But if going up the Gemmi on the back of a mule be a nervous affair, the operation of coming down is so much worse, that to the last day of my life I shall remember the awkwardness of such a predicament. As I could not have walked ten paces to save my life, I was obliged to risk my neck by allowing myself to be perched in an arm-chair, and hoisted on the shoulders not of four but of two men, in a manner contrary to all the laws of stable equilibrium, for the soles of my feet came on a level with their necks. Nevertheless, though loaded with this ill-arranged top-weight, the fellows trudged down the path at a quick, careless, swinging sort of pace, keeping time to the "*Ranz des Vaches*," which one or other of the bearers sung all the way from the top to the bottom of the pass. This was the first time I had heard this strange musical howl—so to call it—in which, along with not a little that is barbarous, there certainly mingles something plaintive, the whole being so wild that it forms a fit accompaniment to Alpine scenery. I have heard many *Ranz des Vaches* since, but never to such advantage as at the falls of the Giesbach, where they were sung by a whole family

in a style so wonderful that I should advise any one who may be in that neighbourhood to make a little diversion from their straight course to hear these singers, whose numbers, I dare say, will never be allowed to diminish. I also remember hearing, long afterwards, the same airs sung by the charming Madame Stockhausen, in the dressed grounds of a London suburban villa. They were, however, so completely out of place that the effect, though strange and not unpleasant, was such as to give scarcely any idea of what this wild song is when heard among its native mountains.

Still I can perfectly well imagine its tones driving a Swiss almost mad if sung to him at a distance from his native valley; while the very same notes might produce no effect at all even on a person of similar temperament, but in whose memory they were not associated with the rugged land which originally prompted their expression. So bewitching, indeed, is Alpine scenery, and such the variety and number of the enjoyments of rambling about in those regions, that often when I have been in countries far distant from Switzerland, on hearing a casual note or two of the *Ranz des Vaches* sighed out by some forlorn mountaineer, I have felt a desire so strong to turn again to the mountains, that, for the time, every other plan seemed cold and forbidding in comparison. Even

at this moment, from the mere warmth produced by the friction of writing on such a subject, I feel that to be cut off from all chance of revisiting Switzerland would be a real banishment.

But I am forgetting the pains and penalties of Alpine travelling, in the pleasant recollection of its ten thousand delights. I must confess that, as on coming up and trying to walk, I had felt only the pains, so on going down the Gemmi, I could think only of the perils. The light-hearted peasants, singing and laughing as they trudged along, swung me round over their heads, as we turned the horrid corners, in such a manner as to show me the fearful abyss below, into which the least slip, or one false step, or the giving way of the slightest particle of the edge of the road, would have tumbled us all headlong ! I had no time to study the picturesque of the prospect which gradually re-opened upon us, in proportion as we left the dense clouds of the upper districts of this singular pass : indeed I could think of nothing but a most unfortunately ominous expression used by the landlord the evening before, when he and I were discussing together the various modes of making the excursion. As I could not walk, and still less relished the notion of being carried on men's shoulders, I had asked if I could not ride down as well as up the pass, for that nothing, it was said, could be more uncomfortable

than being elevated to such an unsteady position in such a place.

“Il faut avouer, monsieur,” said he, “que cette manière de voyager n’est pas agréable—mais on y risque moins !”

The words “risque moins” rung in my ears; and as the implied insecurity of the expression stared me in the face at the terrible turnings of the road, I tried the experiment of shutting my eyes; but almost before I was aware of it, this made me so giddy and sea-sick, that I had nearly lost the equilibrium which my bearers were very urgent in requiring me to maintain, for my own safety as well as theirs, and I was obliged during the rest of the descent to face the peril as well as I might.

Long after the period I am now writing about, I had these feelings recalled to my memory in a very different climate and situation. It was in St. Peter’s at Rome, on Easter Sunday, in the midst of the pompous ceremonies of that day, when his Holiness Pope Gregory XVI. made his appearance before the kneeling multitude, in a chair hoisted, like mine at the Gemmi, on men’s shoulders. I sympathised deeply with the worthy Bishop of Rome, who—not to speak it profanely—appeared in no small degree alarmed, and with some reason, for the bearers tripped more than once, and nearly threw him headlong. I observed the poor pope

try my plan of shutting his eyes, but this did not save him, for he soon turned as pale as ashes, and speedily re-opened them, and looked round with the air of a steam-boat passenger in an agony for the steward. I could not help thinking at the time what a satire it would have been on human greatness, had the head of the Roman Catholic church—in the centre of St. Peter's—been obliged to step down from his elevation, and, to prevent worse consequences, fairly take to his feet like an ordinary mortal !

On reaching at last in safety the baths of Leuk, lying near the foot of this extraordinary mountain pass, I managed, by help of a stick on one side and a friend's arm on the other, to crawl into one of the large bath rooms, where rather a comical sight met our eyes. The heads and shoulders of between twenty and thirty persons might be seen above the surface of a great reservoir or bath, of a square form, all the party being immersed, nearly up to their throats, in water so hot, that the steam rose from it in clouds, while they seemed to be patiently undergoing the process of parboiling ! The ladies and gentlemen, mixed indiscriminately together, were surrounded by children, romping and splashing through the water near their parents. Each patient, of course, wore a long robe or bathing-gown, and most of them some kind of head-dress.

Before them floated small tables, on which the ladies placed their work, the gentlemen their books and newspapers, the children their toys. Some of the company sipped their chocolate; others passed their time in clipping different coloured papers, and pasting them into artificial flowers; and certainly the greater number, though merely chatting together, appeared to be enjoying themselves greatly. In short, it was like an ordinary assembly, seated in different parts of a large drawing-room, with only the queer addition of hot water as a medium of communication! In a low gallery extending along the four sides of the bath, sat groups of other persons, friends of the invalids, who, without entering the water, lent their society to keep up the spirits of the patients whom the protracted discipline of this strange method of cure requires to remain soaking from eight to ten hours a-day!

There seemed such a merry sort of innocent indecorum about the whole of this comical transaction, that I felt strongly tempted, in spite of its absurdity, to join the party in the hot water; and if my companions had not been more than usually under that feverish state of eternal hurry which whirls people from place to place, I should certainly have taken an hour or two of the bath, on the principle that the best way to judge of such

things is to try them oneself; besides which, I really had no objections to being parboiled in good company.

A learned person in the gallery told us that at first the patient is allowed to stay only half-an-hour a-day in the bath; next day an hour; and so on gradually increasing, till at the middle of the "cure," he keeps simmering eight or ten hours till certain symptoms are produced; after which the daily cooking is gradually diminished, in the same ratio it has been augmented before.

This fantastical process will remind those who have been in the Peninsula of the method used in Spain to fatten a Christmas turkey. Some six weeks or a couple of months before the day on which he is destined to be roasted, a single walnut is crammed down his throat; on the next day he is made to swallow two; and so on increasing his meal in arithmetical progression till he can hold no more, say thirty or forty. He is then supposed to have reached the maximum point of a turkey's happiness. From that period his allowance of walnuts is daily diminished by one, till at the last, when his bodily condition is at the best, and his appetite the sharpest possible, his fare, like that of the Frenchman's horse, becomes nothing at all. He then receives the "coup de grace" of the cocinero!

The next pass which we crossed was the well

known Simplon, of which nothing new can be now said, though it is not by any means on that account the less interesting to travel over. I am not sure, indeed, that the scenery of the Simplon has so much to do with the matter, as the associations which connect it with the memory of Napoleon. For, whatever be the opinions we may have formed respecting that great soldier, it is impossible to feel anything but respect and admiration for him on passing along this gigantic pass—the first of the kind that was made.

Poor Bony ! how naturally one forgets the faults and forgives the injuries of such a magnificent fellow as could first conceive and then execute a road like this. A fico for those who whine and cant, and say “that it was all done to serve the purposes of his own ambition.” It was done to serve those purposes which he considered the best for his country ! But, after all, is it not petty work to stop on the Simplon to consider what were the motives which induced its projector to construct so stupendous a work ? Surely ladies and gentlemen ought to be sufficiently thankful for the journey, without pecking at the dead body of the lion who, when alive, with a single playful pat of his majestic paw, would have crushed a hundred thousand cockneys, had they dared to cross his path !

CHAPTER X.

OF THE CAMPAGNES OF GENEVA.

ON first coming to any place, but particularly to the neighbourhood of Geneva, all one's thoughts are taken up with considering where and how we are to be lodged. For, though there be folks in the world so very philosophical as to maintain that place and circumstance do not or ought not to influence happiness, I have found that few things belonging to the minor order of circumstances, contribute more to cheerfulness, than being well housed, or aid and assist more in making everything else go on smoothly. On the other hand, few things are more productive of discontent than being crammed into an uncomfortable abode, especially in Switzerland, with no view, no air, no walks, no lake, no Mont Blanc !

Now, as our party had had a good deal of experience both ways, we often discussed, beforehand, what we should wish when we came to settle

for the summer at Geneva. This, I should mention, was in 1833, fifteen years after the trip to the Gemmi described in the last chapter, and when I was travelling with my wife and family.

In the first place, said we, our house must not be in the town, but only near it; in the next, it must be in the country; thirdly, we must positively not only see the lake, but have a good view of it from our very windows; fourthly, we must command a good view of Mont Blanc; and, fifthly, we should like to possess shady gravel-walks, for hot weather, and trellised vine-bowers, besides a good garden, and a pleasant carriage-approach to our faultless “campagne.” Moreover, said we, the house itself must be commodious, low in rent, well furnished, clean, and all ready to step into!

This is a pretty considerable list of desiderata, but wonderful to say, we managed to find them all. As we approached Geneva, which was to be our resting-place for some time, we were told by every one that we were much too late to find anything so *recherché* as we described not engaged long before, and that we must put up either with something very bad, or very dear, or ill-placed, or be very much cramped, possibly having all these evils conjoined. “Pooh!—pooh!” said I, “let us go on, and look about for ourselves.

I have got a campagne in my mind's eye, and a little bird whispers in my ear that some fairy will touch the banks of the lake with her wand, and straightway our little palace will rise and admit us. It is in Switzerland with Lausanne relatively to Geneva, as it is with Florence in Italy, relatively to Rome — all classes of people at these two minor cities endeavour, naturally enough, to arrest the passers-by, and to persuade them that what they are in quest of may be found without going further. I was, accordingly, rather surprised that our landlord at Lausanne agreed to assist me in our researches at Geneva. "I am too far off," said he, "from Geneva to speak positively as to the vacant campagnes near the town, but if you are going, as you ought certainly to go, to the Hôtel des Etrangers, I will give you a line to my friend M. Baer, and if the thing be possible, he will arrange it for you." It is curious to observe the springs of action. This landlord, though at first provoked at our not halting for the season at Lausanne, was yet so much gratified by the trivial circumstance of our adopting his advice in a dispute we had with our voiturier, that he took a lively interest in our success, though it carried us away from the spot where it might have been his interest to have kept us.

On drawing near to Geneva, the numerous cam-

pagnes with which the border of the lake is studded engaged our attention more and more, in proportion as they fell within the limits of our definition. We sighed at the beauties of some, beyond our reach, and criticised the looks of others, or quarrelled with their situation, size, and so forth. The lake looked, as it almost always does, enchanting. The soft air of summer breathed deliciously upon us, and though the monarch of mountains was hid from our view, the lower ridges of the Alps rose in the middle distance in such beauty, that we grieved, at every turn of the road which concealed them from us, at the too great probability of our not getting any place from which we might view them permanently, and from our own windows, which is the only way to enjoy scenery to good purpose in Switzerland, or perhaps anywhere else.

The sun was just setting with all the busy splendour which attends him in mountainous regions, when we drove up to the door of the Hôtel des Etrangers; but our thoughts were far less occupied with the picturesque than with the vulgar details of a night's lodging. I looked, therefore, with much more interest to discover which was the landlord amongst a troop of waiters with beautiful waistcoats and dandified cravats, who rushed forth to receive us, than I did to all the magnificence of a Genevese sunset. In the *mêlée* of these smart

gentlemen I readily made out the unpretending master of the house, and slipped my note into his hands. Whether it was this, or his own good-nature, or good manners, or good sense, or that he took a fancy to the children, I know not, but certainly nothing could exceed his attention, except his real kindness and disinterested assistance. His house, however, was so full, that there were but few rooms to choose amongst. An English nobleman, who had been taken ill at Geneva, had engaged the whole of the principal story, and, of course, minor persons were glad to be accommodated far up in the world.

This point settled, I came down to the court, and taking mine host on one side, begged him, as a friend, to favour me with his advice touching the grand point of a campagne; for I had heard, I said, that he had more in his power in that way than any one else.

“I shall be happy to help you,” he replied, “but almost all the houses are already taken, and those which are still to let are very high in rent. But what are the points you require?” So I told him of our wish to be near Geneva, to be close to the lake, to be in sight of Mont Blanc, and to pay a small rent for all this.

He smiled at the string of first-rate demands which he said the English invariably made, but

added, that he did know of one *campagne* still unlet which united all the requisites except the last,—namely, a low rent.

“Let’s go and see it!” I exclaimed; and off we set without our hats, for it was but a step. The appearance of a showy iron gate, rows of grand trees, gravel-walks, shrubberies, vines, orchards, and a flower-garden, made me fear that however delightful, such a spot must of necessity be far beyond my means; and so I told my companion. On we walked, however, under rows of walnut-trees, chesnuts, and limes, till we came to the very margin of the lake, where a most promising mansion indeed showed itself; nor was this promise belied.

The chief entrance was from the garden behind; so that all the principal windows, in fact almost all the windows, looked either full on the lake, or on the ridges of the Alps beyond it. A broad gravelled terrace, ten paces across, guarded by a low wall covered with creepers, and actually built in the water, connected the house with the lake. This terrace was closed overhead by a thick horizontal matting of what we thought at first were vines, trained along an open tracery of rods, supported by slight posts, at such wide intervals as not to interrupt the view. We afterwards discovered that this ceiling of leaves proceeded from three

small plane-trees, planted in the middle of the terrace, and so arranged that only those branches were left which, when trained horizontally, formed a frame-work quite hid by the foliage, and so thick that it excluded not only the brightest sun, but even, for a considerable time, a smart shower of rain. At the end of this charming terrace next to the city all inspection from without was cut off by a growing wall, consisting partly of a closely-planted row of poplars and partly by a network, formed of the branches of small elm-trees, so trained in their youth in the way they should go, as to extend only upwards and sideways, in the direction of the row of poplars. On the other side—that is in the north-east, looking up the lake, from which quarter the wind called the Bise blows—the house and terrace were sheltered by a thick shrubbery of acacias, yew-trees, and rose-bushes, growing under a large horse-chesnut, a lime-tree of almost equal dimensions overshadowing the whole group.

The drawing-room, the floor of which was flush with the ground, opened by a glass-door into the terrace, at the middle of the side next the lake, and by another similar door at the end, into the shrubbery under the horse-chesnut. This, by means of a small circular drive, formed the entrance-door for those who came in carriages, after they had been set down at an arbour, serving as a porch.

The windows of the dining-room, which opened from the drawing-room, likewise looked out upon Mont Blanc, the Salève, and the lake, including a view of the rich suburbs of Geneva and of many of the numerous thickly-wooded *campagnes* or villas, at the southern end of that magnificent sheet of water, which becomes very narrow as it approaches the city. Consequently the crowds of pretty sailing boats and row boats, from all parts of the lake, making for the town or leaving it, are obliged to pass close to the shore, and greatly help to give life to this delicious landscape.

I must mention an interesting historical circumstance connected with the *campagne* I am trying to describe. It appears that Sir Humphrey Davy had occupied it during one of his last visits to Geneva, but before the terrace had been built, so that the lake then came close up to the walls of the house. Sir Humphrey, whose passion for fishing is well known, even in the midst of his studies occasionally threw up the window, and while other people, supposing him immersed in philosophical speculation, refrained from entering, thrust forth his fishing-rod and easily cast his hook into deep water. The landlord, with a pride every one will sympathise in, pointed out the very spot where the accomplished philosopher indulged in his favourite amusement, which, we have the best authority

for believing, never interrupted the course of those sublime speculations which, when matured into practical application, delighted the scientific world.

The more I saw of this desirable residence, and especially when I came to look at the internal accommodations, the more I felt persuaded that such an unlooked-for combination of advantages could not possibly come within the compass of any half-pay purse. We had resolved not to give more than 1500 francs, or about £60, for any campagne for the season, and we even hoped to get one for something less. The season at Geneva is considered to last between five and six months, from the end of May to October, both partly inclusive. Now as both May and June were gone, we fancied we might get some sort of place for July, August, and September, for the sum to which we had limited ourselves. But such a campagne as this we dared not to dream of, and I returned to the hotel to report progress, and to confer with my friend the landlord as to the probable rent. My heart sunk within me as he said that he had heard the owner of the campagne speak of four thousand francs ! Nevertheless, after tea, accompanied by all my family, I again visited the house and grounds ; the second view proved even more fascinating than the first, and after sighing and looking—sighing and looking again—over the rooms, the terraces, and

the shady walks, and indulging in peeps of the Alps, and the lake, and the adjacent city, I drew breath anxiously, and ventured to ask the owner what might be the rent?

“Why,” said the lord of the happy mansion, “I had determined not to let it for less than four thousand francs, but as more than a month of the season has slipped away, I am willing to take twenty-four hundred.”—We now sighed without looking, and turned to leave the garden with as “wandering steps, and slow” as did our first parents when banished from Eden, on which their hearts could scarcely have been more fixed than ours were on the campagne Fauconnet.

The proprietor accompanied us with the air of a man who wished to do anything rather than expel us from his premises; and just as I was going to make him some offer, (far short of his twenty-four hundred francs) he himself seeing we were near the gate, said, with an affected carelessness, “Pray make me some offer.” I made him none, however—for two reasons—first, I had but an obscure idea of what I ought, in reason, to offer, and wished to take advice on that score; and next, I wished to affect an indifference which was far from my heart. I then learned, for the thousandth time, that nothing is so uncharitable, or less calculated to enforce the injunction of

loving our neighbour as ourself, than these zig-zags, or traverses by which one approaches a bargain. So our personal intercourse dropped for that time. But I dreamed all night of the rippings of the water on the walls of the terrace, the rustling of the vine-leaves overhead, and the cool shade of the walks and the arbours, and of the well-placed seats fronting Mont Blanc. From these luxurious imaginations of the quiet repose of the campagne, I was awakened at half-past six next morning by the harsh sound of a pianoforte, miserably out of tune, thumped to pieces by two young ladies practising Cramer's exercises. This disturbance, succeeded by the ordinary hullabaloo of even the best-regulated hotel, contrasted so powerfully with the tranquillity of the retired villa we had been looking at, that I felt disposed to hurry to a conclusion on any terms with the landlord.

But a consultation with mine host induced me to avoid all appearance of hurry or over-anxiety, and in this spirit of deception and false pretences, I hired a char-à-banc, and visited several other campagnes; talked to sundry friends who lived in the neighbourhood, and returned at night more pleased than ever with my first love. I could not help feeling that it would have served me right had the owner let his campagne while I was coquetting after this fashion, and it was with some

trepidation I inquired in the evening if anything had been done. "If you are determined," said the friendly master of the hotel, "to give fifteen hundred francs and no more, let me go at once and make an offer of fourteen, and see what will be the result." To this I agreed, and deputed him to carry on the negotiation. Next morning, to our infinite joy, a communication reached us that we might have the place we had set our hearts on, not for the whole season, but for three months, for the sum we were prepared to give.

As this was all we really wanted, we were not slow to put things in train, and before night we had hired a native female cook and a Piedmontese manservant—a cheery fellow who touched the guitar, and had a ready hand for every kind of play or work. Before the next night we had taken possession, and our establishment was in full action—the walks all weeded and raked; the trees and shrubs pruned out of the way of the carriages; and all trimmed up as if we had been at home for a month. It is possible that, by exerting our ingenuity, we might have discovered faults in our new possession, but our habits being of a different cast, instead of repenting of our bargain, we daily found fresh reasons to consider that our fondest expectations had been realised. The Spaniards have a proverb, that while some people

fall naturally on their legs, others as naturally pitch on their backs ; and certainly in the matter of houses we verified the first part of the proverb, for wherever we went a house appeared to have been got up expressly for us to enter !

The well-known Vent de Bise, which blows from the north-east with considerable violence even in summer along the lake of Geneva, set in on the 4th of July, just as we took possession, and changed the climate immediately from hot to cold ; but being well housed, we lighted our fires, and cared little for the change. During the night we could hear the waves of the lake lashing against the wall of the terrace, in a style not unworthy of the great sea itself in some sheltered bay. But even with this, and with the wind sweeping amongst the trees, the house lay in so low and sheltered a position, that the stillness of the scene was scarcely broken. I awoke at four o'clock, and drawing back a sliding shutter, had the satisfaction of seeing the great feature of the landscape in all his glory, towering above a long line of subordinate glaciers, stretching far to the north or left-hand, and looking much higher and more conspicuous than ever. We had, indeed, got an occasional glimpse of the mountain from the hotel, and from other points as we drove along the northern bank of the lake, but the clouds had covered all the other ranges so com-

pletely, that until this moment we had no expectation of possessing from our very windows one of the best, if not the very best view of the whole ridge. The wind had entirely fallen, and from the peculiar sharpness of the morning light, the outline of all the hills became so distinct that they seemed close at hand. Even the chief of the whole, whose top began presently to catch the first touches of the sun's rays, appeared close at hand; and casting about till I found a copy of Lord Byron's *Manfred*, I read with a feeling of reality which only imaginative poetry can impart, the beautiful address beginning,—

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crown'd him long ago,
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.

Around his waist are forests braced,
The avalanche is in his hand,
But ere it fall that thundering ball
Must pause for my command! &c.

It must not be supposed that the multitude of *campagnes* which are scattered along the shores of the lake of Geneva, are all got up for the benefit of the strangers, who certainly do flock in considerable numbers to that country, although it does happen that a good many of them are from time to

time occupied by foreigners. The Genevese themselves, in fact, have a strong national propensity to become possessors of a bit of land, upon which they may build a country-house, no matter how small, so it be what may bear the name of a campagne. I have been told many stories of persons who have passed the greater part of their lives in laborious exertion in foreign lands, and amid all sorts of privations, stimulated chiefly by this one object of ambition! The mass of the people at Geneva are, indeed, wonderfully prudent in all that relates to what is called the "main chance." Scarcely a man lives beyond his income, very few live up to it, and almost all lay by a considerable portion of it annually. It can be understood also, that many of them, though eminently thrifty in everything else, have ruined themselves by engaging in speculations which promised high gains, but burst in bubbles. The Swiss are twitted pretty much as the Scotch are with their love of money. "*Point d'argent—point de Suisse*" is a biting satire applicable to both all over the world. But it is not alone in this thrifty characteristic that they resemble each other, for, like the Scotch, the Swiss wander all over the earth, in search of gold. By their industrious habits, and by their innate probity and fidelity in all their shades—the offspring of sound principles instilled into them

in early youth, they gain the confidence of their employers in every rank of life, and while they are implicitly trusted, they repay in hearty and faithful service the obligations they incur.

In one respect, indeed, the Swiss differ from the Scotch. They generally return home with the cash they have amassed, in order to spend it amongst those mountains which have never for one moment quitted their imaginations during the period of what they always, in secret at least, consider their exile. The Scotch, on the other hand, are too apt, I fear, gradually to forget their country—so far, at least, as to take up very cheerfully with the superior comforts and other advantages of England. In my own case, however, like any exiled Helvetian, I can never hear a stray note of any of our national airs, without being carried suddenly back to the mountains and valleys of old Scotland, amongst which I have rambled so much and so often. I remember once in particular, when wandering far away in the interior of India, I heard accidentally Smollett's beautiful lines, beginning—

“ On Leven's banks while free to rove
And tune the rural pipe to love,”

repeated by a countryman. The effect was instantaneous, and reminded me of Humboldt's theory that there occur, occasionally, magnetic shocks so

deeply seated in the heart of the earth, that they affect the magnetic needle at the same instant of time, on spots ten thousand miles apart. As I felt the invisible, but indissoluble, chord of national sympathy, thus casually touched in a foreign land, vibrate home again, I owed and paid much gratitude to the poet who by the graphic magic of his numbers, could thus annihilate both time and space, and give me, even amidst the gorgeous teak forests of Malabar, so true a taste of the superior attractions of my own distant Fatherland.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE.

LET people say what they please about being indifferent to climate, there can be no doubt that it is a great advantage to have fine weather for any purpose, grave or gay. A clear sky above, and a smiling landscape below; water covered with sailing-vessels and row-boats at one place, and so smooth and unsailed over at another, that the wooded banks of the middle distance are cast downwards in long, coloured streaks—more beautiful even than the originals—are but a few of the numerous circumstances which help us to get through protracted difficulties, since the mind is kept fresh and cheerful, by the contemplation of agreeable objects. On the other hand, a rainy, dark, blustering day, acts like a drag-chain on the spirits, and, by augmenting fears and repressing hopes, tends greatly to discourage those who are struggling to conceal emotions which it might be hurtful to express, or likely to add to the cares

of the sufferer, whose troubles may already pretty well fill up the cup of endurance.

Whether this be so or not, there can be no doubt that there come across us certain black days, in which everything goes wrong. In the morning we awake more wearied by our own busy dreams than refreshed by the night's sleep. We huddle on our clothes, and find nothing to fit us right; in our impatience, like Shakspeare's tailor, we "falsely thrust our slippers on contrary feet," in ominous anticipation of the day's being out of joint. We ring and ring, but can't get a servant to answer the bell—the hot water, when it does come, is cold—the new rolls are stale—the fresh cream sour. The postman either trots past our door altogether, or, instead of bringing the letters we are anxiously looking for, hands in an abominable tradesman's bill, supposed to have been long ago paid off, but now overlaid with compound interest. The persons we had desired to meet us either cannot or will not come, or they mistake the hour, or we mistake it, and incur the reproach of negligence, or, which is nearly as teasing, we find our intentions misinterpreted; so that both their affairs and our own are bungled. The treacherous sky, whose incipient brilliancy tempted us to arrange a pic-nic party, changes to black; and the wind, as if purely to spite us, chops round to the bitter east, right in the

teeth of our track. We know of something going wrong which only the private counsel of a confidential friend can put right; we esconce him in our snugger, but just as we have begun our talk some "patent steel" bore of a fellow, whom to tolerate at any time is a severe effort, thrusts in his nose, cuts off our tale, and talks of his disorganised stomach. The company we look for to cheer us send excuses, and those who, at last, poorly furnish forth the feast are so essentially dull, that they quintuple the gloom of the starved table; while our strained attempts at courtesy are counteracted by the twinges of a toothach, or a servant we have taken on trial gets tipsy, and tripping over a "very particular" guest's gouty toe, dashes the tea-urn into a huge mirror; upon which, losing all patience and control, we lend the fellow a hearty cuff, and thus end the day in anger, as we began it in sulkiness!

In like manner, though of a very different complexion, there are some days when everything goes right with us, from the first peep of dawn to the last trace of twilight. We awaken with fresh spirits, and see all nature renovated, smiling and sparkling before us. We feel grateful for everything far and near, and secretly if not openly acknowledge the obligation with genuine and pious sincerity, not with mere lip-service. As the day advances, great

matters, as well as trifles, seem to fall into their proper places with the most appropriate regularity, and just in the very way we wish them. The urn is in full boil—the tea never gave out so rich a flavour before — the toast was never so crisp, or the eggs so newly laid. The merry postman's rap!—rap! brings the very letters we looked for, with just the news we desired to hear. If we wish to write an answer, the nicest pen in the world lies all ready nibbed to our hand—the words flow into their places as the ideas rise; and we sign and seal our letter with the pleasant feeling that its contents will be well received. If we have an appointment at noon and are pressed for time, we are overtaken on the road by a friend, who offers us a cast; so that the person at the rendezvous joins us, watch in hand, praising our punctuality. If we ride to the spot, even our horse partakes of the genial influence of the bright day, and seems also in spirits. But if we prefer walking, the weather is of the right temperature to one degree of Fahrenheit—there is no dust—no more wind than just to fan the flies away—the sun, too, is at the proper altitude, for the lights and shades of the landscape. If we take our favourite round by the sea-side, the tide ripples along the beach at high water-mark; and, before we have been there a minute, we encounter the person we most desired

to see. It may be the doctor, who assures us that the alarming symptoms of a friend's illness had passed off; and that another, whose death we had grieved to hear, had been mistaken for a person of the same name, but of whom we knew nothing. On re-entering the house, refreshed by exercise, we take up the papers, of which every paragraph contains gratifying intelligence; and just as we are casting about for some agreeable and useful mental employment, a parcel comes from America with a new book from the pen of the accomplished Miss Sedgwick, the Maria Edgeworth of the new world. As the dressing-gong rings, a carriage drives up with the party whom we had despaired of seeing at dinner; and in the evening, every turn of the conversation, every note of the piano, every look from every eye, speaks of good-fellowship and cheerfulness. And when at length we lie down at night, we have no care on our minds but what springs from a sense of our own unworthiness of so much happiness, and a still more painful sense of our inability either to express in adequate language the extent of our gratitude, or to make resolutions strong enough to show our sense of so many blessings.

Some of these views may appear fanciful, but I suspect that those who have had most real business

to do in the world will, on looking back, be free to confess that their capacity for doing good service at moments of trial is often much more under the influence of such apparently trivial circumstances as the state of the weather, than they may like to acknowledge at the moment.

Be all these speculations, however, as they may, I well remember feeling under a sort of personal obligation to old Mont Blanc, with his hoary pate, for looking down upon our campagne with so smiling an aspect, when my first-born son came squalling and bawling into the world ! It seemed to me that this noblest of mountains never looked so grand before, and I shall ever associate the singular emotions of that moment with the bright touch of the evening light resting so tranquilly on the top and sides of the glaciers, that it seemed unwilling to go away.

The day had been a very long and very anxious one ; but at no period of it had I been insensible to the genial influence of the climate and situation, and it is possible the serene weather may have contributed to hide from me the gradual accession of fever, which long watching and other strains upon the nerves are so apt to induce at such moments. The truth is that, in spite of what the political economists assert, that the

chances are rather in favour of a male child being born than of a female, I was rather taken by surprise to find myself the father of a boy.

With this feeling on my mind, and while gazing intently on Mont Blanc, I fell into a turbid slumber, which was indeed not to be surprised at, as I had been for so many hours without closing my eyes. As I dropped asleep I first saw—or imagined I saw, marshalled before me, in feverish array, all the possible accidents of my poor little man's future life. By one of those singular delusions which belong to this kind of disturbed state of the circulation, I never once suspected that bodily weakness was the cause, combined with a degree of excitement which, had I only laid my finger on my pulse, I might have detected. I fancied that the distant mountain, and all the intermediate ranges, had faded one by one gradually from my sight, leaving only the great sheet of water at their base, the matchless lake of Geneva. Nor did there seem anything remarkable in the substitution of a fleet of line-of-battle ships for the hills; nor, that on the deck of one of them I should see my son in a middy's dress. In the next instant, however, all was confusion, and the cry of mutiny rang fore and aft! I was then horrified to see my boy prostrate under the cutlass of a ruffian.—I leaped forward, as I thought, to clutch him away, but in a moment felt myself

transported to St. James's Street, walking arm-in-arm with the youth, now grown to manhood, and arrayed in a military uniform—the officer on guard at the Palace. At the bottom of the street we were stopped by a hearse, and on turning to speak to my companion about the procession—he was gone! and in his place lay a coffin at my feet, with the lad's name, in brass nails on its top! I felt the tears which came to my eyes checked by anger at a loud laugh from an adjacent window, near which, sitting at a desk, I saw the same figure with a pen behind his ear, a prosperous gentleman, a citizen of famous London town. I wished him joy—glad to see him out of his grave again; but he started back, exclaiming, “touch me not,—I am a bankrupt—a ruined man—starving as you see!” And then he uttered a low, infantine cry for food, so dolorous that I started upright in my bed; when, to my horror, I still heard the sound. It was indeed from my son, but not as yet in such a scrape. He was merely squalling for his first meal—poor little man!

As I felt the fever, caused by long watching, had not yet subsided, I soothed, or tried to soothe myself, by reflecting, that the painful images which sleep had brought into the front of the picture, would, if they occurred at all, be spread over a period of years, and be gradually approached, and

might be counteracted by education and principle, rightly applied. In this new cast of the fever I again fell asleep to dream of Eton, till a sort of night-mare possessed me, and I fancied the boy had grown so tall that he rapped his head against the ceiling. The sound awoke me, and I discovered that the shutter of the open window near the sofa on which I had been tossing was driven gently backwards and forwards against the wall, by a slight puff of wind stealing along the margin of the lake.

It was just at the moment of the earliest peep of day-break. I rose, and feeling that sleep gave me no rest, tried to gain composure by reflection from the still and perfectly silent scene before me. I put my hand to my forehead, which felt as if on fire, and envying much the calmness of the water, had half a mind to cool myself by plunging into it from the terrace.

At this end of the lake, the stream of the mighty Rhone can be distinctly traced, gliding with a slow but majestic pace towards the outlet. Only one small market-boat was in motion at this early hour, apparently carried along by the current alone, for I could see no one in her. Every other vessel, whether a row-boat, or fitted with masts and sails, lay either at anchor, or with their keels biting the sand, seemed waiting for the morn-

ing, which was just beginning to appear. No sound of any kind could be heard, for even the leaves, well steeped in dew, lay as still as if they had been cast in bronze. The landscape on every hand was equally motionless, except where an occasional faint flaw, or light air of wind, caused I know not how, ruffled the surface of the water, or moved the foliage so gently as scarcely to be perceptible to the eye, but sufficient to dislodge some drops of dew from the overloaded leaves, and to cause a dropping sound, like the first of a thunder-shower. This however, being only for an instant, served to deepen the universal silence.

At first, in the early stages of the twilight, neither Mont Blanc, nor any of the less distant hills, could be made out at all; but, as the day broke, these mountain giants came one by one into sight. What seemed to me very strange, was the jet-black appearance of the shadows of some of the whitest of the glaciers, caused, I suppose, by all the adjacent parts being lighted up by the first rays of the sun. The top line seen against the cold, bright, blue sky beyond it, though the most distant of all, looked so uncommonly distinct, that I could reckon every pinnacle or needle, and see into every crevice, with that sort of certainty with which we examine a hand specimen of a rock.

While straining my sight to investigate those re-

mote districts, brought forward with such wonderful distinctness, my attention was so insensibly drawn away from nearer objects, that I forgot all that had recently passed, and almost imagined myself transported to the mountain tops. Meanwhile, the sun seemed to take an unusually long time in climbing the "eastern gate;"—but while I was speculating on this phenomenon, and trying to account for the small variation in the appearance of the scenery, his glorious rays—ten times more refulgent than I ever remember to have seen them, as if suddenly let loose, and gushing in a huge "debacle" or flood of light, appeared over the eastern summit of the mountain called the Voiron, deluging the whole country with an intense blaze of molten gold. At this triumphant signal all the rest of nature appeared to start from its slumbers. The effect on my still confused senses was as if millions of trumpets, and thousands of chariot wheels, were sounding in the east and ushering in the god of day. The suddenness and brightness of the glare were so excessive that I was forced to turn my eyes the other way.

On now looking towards the lake, all its tranquillity was gone. Everything appeared in motion both on land and sea, as all the boats had gotten under weigh; oars splashed on every side, with sails loosed and sheeted home, urging them briskly in different directions. The faint touches

of the night-wind had freshened into so rattling a breeze, that I could hear the masts of the nearest vessels creaking under their canvas, and even the fresh water waves of the lake could be heard lipping themselves smartly against the wall of the terrace, in a manner not unworthy of the ocean itself. On shore, too, the recent stillness had been converted into noise and bustle ; for all the roads on both sides of the lake were now crowded with carts and carriages, and the rattle of wheels, mingled with the songs of the workmen on their way to the fields, rung on every hand.

While lamenting the total destruction of the late quiet scene, thus rudely broken in upon, I sought for relief by casting my eyes once more towards my old friend Mont Blanc—but the whole poetical sentiment of the distant landscape had been carried away by this overwhelming mass of vulgar life. As long as I had the scene all to myself, and was the only spectator, I felt no difficulty in creating such images to people it withal as suited the excited condition of my feelings ; but when the rest of mankind took their place on the stage, I could no longer sustain the delusion, and like a troubled dream the whole faded gradually away.

So I closed the shutters, betook myself a third time to my pillow, and slept for many hours,

without any more dreams. On awaking, at length I felt completely refreshed, quite free from fever or anxiety, and ready to take the future as it might come, only wondering what could have disturbed my thoughts so much, and given me cause of imaginary anxiety, amidst such substantial happiness.

CHAPTER XII.

THE END OF LIFE.

A FEW days after the occurrence of the dreams and realities of the last chapter, I received a letter from a friend in England who, some years previously, when residing in Switzerland, had engaged the services of a native of the country, of respectable family and excellent character. With this person my friend had so much reason to be satisfied, that the sincerest interest was taken in her fortunes long after their immediate connexion had ceased. Until a period shortly antecedent to the time I am speaking of, it was fully believed that this old friend was in easy circumstances, and passing the evening of her days in that happy contentment which is the genuine fruit of a well-spent life, and which so often characterises the history of those industrious and high-principled Swiss who earn such a competence in foreign lands, as becomes luxury in their simple homes. She had long been left the widow of a man of some

property, one of the magistrates of their small town ; but her son, who might and ought to have been the prop and consolation of his mother, proved to her only a source of grief, and eventually wrought the ruin of his parent. This son she had educated for a profession he had chosen for himself, and she had denied herself almost every luxury in order that no expense might be spared to advance him in the world.

In spite of all this care, and possibly in some measure in consequence of excessive indulgence, he became a headstrong and unsettled youth, and disdaining the slow but sure gains of the line of life to which he had been brought up, he must needs make a rapid fortune by establishing an inn, and taking unto himself a wife—the double-peaked rock upon which so many inconsiderate adventurers in that class of life are shipwrecked. Ruin followed fast ; and unfortunately a mother's fondness blinded the old lady so much, that while she fully believed she was aiding her son's rise in the world by joining in the securities required by the money-lenders, she was, in fact, accelerating his downfall by furnishing him with the means of gratifying his profligate tastes. When the crash came, therefore, both were ruined, and the prodigal son not only deserted the mother who bore him, but inverted the instruction he had received from her, by aban-

doning to misery and want the wife whom he had married, although he knew that she was penniless, and the infant she had given birth to in the midst of total want. The poor woman, true to her duties, would not move, but the man cut and ran to Paris, where having soon found a knot of kindred spirits, he became a *laquais-de-place*, and probably, so far as his means went, a “*roué*” of the first order.

The Swiss, like the Spaniards, are essentially a proud people, who submit for a long time with wonderful patience to misfortune, before they can bend their high spirit to solicit any assistance, especially of a pecuniary nature which they know they can never repay. Accordingly, this excellent person never wrote to her distant friends, till privation and many sorrows had placed her almost beyond the reach of human help. In the letter which she wrote at last, she says, “I am now reduced to the single dress I have on, and even that I have difficulty in keeping out of the pawnbroker’s hands.”

Such an appeal was not to be neglected for one instant, and a letter was instantly written off to an English clergyman residing in the same canton, begging him to visit and relieve the poor old lady. Either this letter did not reach its destination, or the gentleman had quitted the neighbourhood; but as no answer came from him, and only still

more distressing communications from the object of our story, a letter was written to me, requesting me to interest myself in the matter. It seemed that the poor woman, from having devoted her life to education, thought of setting up a school—it was to be hoped as a mere teacher or assistant—for her health and other circumstances seemed to put it out of the question, her carrying on such a labourous undertaking without a partner of some kind. She had also spoken of her having a relative in some far away country in the north of Europe, and in her despair of other assistance, she had dreamed, poor old body, of traversing the intermediate regions in the vain hope of setting up a school there.

As all parties appeared to reckon upon no help from the son, I was furnished with a sum of money amply sufficient, it was hoped, for present use, and perhaps large enough to re-establish the good woman in some comfortable position in the world. As a small help of this kind goes a long way in Switzerland, I felt certain that even if the school-scheme or the project of the journey were to fail, very much might be done to alleviate the immediate distress.

I lost not a moment therefore in executing the generous commission intrusted to me, but hired a ‘char-à-banc’ and pair of horses, and taking one of my little girls with me as a companion on a journey

which I had a strong conviction would be a melancholy one, but which I thought might prove instructive, I set out for the town in which the old lady lived, distant from Geneva only a few leagues. We had the sun on one side, so that by keeping up the hood of our rumbling vehicle, we were tolerably protected from the heat, without losing sight of the brilliant scenery before us, and on the lake along the margin of which we coasted amongst *campagnes* or country-houses and vineyards, in endless profusion and variety of tasteful arrangement. It was in the middle of August, a season when Switzerland is in its "most gorgeous livery dight," when nothing is wanting in the way of climate, and everything that heart can desire is furnished in the way of scenery. On the other side of the lake we had a more remote, but still a distinct, view of the same kind of richly-wooded, well-peopled, and warm landscape, amongst the kindred beauties of which we were now threading our way. The prospect, however, on the further side of the lake was backed by the sterner elegances of several ranges of the Alps, rising behind one another in that magnificent succession which at certain hours of the day greatly augments their importance by pointing out their relative heights and distances. Indeed, no one who does not remain for a considerable time at one spot in Switzerland, so as to see the moun-

tains under the boundless variety of lights and shades which belong to the morning, noon, and the evening views, can possibly form any just conception of their surpassing splendour.

The hot wind, called by the people at Geneva, though I know not why, "Le Vent," or the Breeze, which comes from the West, or rather the Southwest, was blowing along the lake in a very different style from the uncomfortable "Bise," which is a sharp, piercing, bracing sort of wind. The "Vent" on the contrary, resembles, I believe, in many respects, the baleful Scirocco of the Mediterranean, in sultry heat, closeness, dampness, and especially in the enervating influence it exercises on the body, and consequently the depressing influence on the mind—the body's slave ! Be this, or something else the cause, we struggled in vain to feel cheerful, and contemplated nothing but sorrow in our melancholy mission.

We drove, as directed, to the Café, from whence the letters had been dated, which we reached between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. On stepping out I learned, with no surprise, that the object of my search lay very ill in her room upstairs. I asked if I could see her, and was shown to an apartment which I was glad to find airy and comfortable; for I had pictured to myself a garret, with straw pallet, and the other received ad-

juncts of penury. Alas ! I found misery enough without these squalid accompaniments.

I saw at a glance that the poor lady must be all but beyond the reach of comfort ; and as I looked at her faded form and pallid cheek, I could not help a momentary trace of the ridiculous crossing my mind, at the notion of a person in this condition dreaming of a journey from Switzerland to the north of Europe.

The broken-hearted widow, and far worse than childless mother, lay on a sofa, drawn near to a high open window, in order that she might enjoy the sense of freshness rather than of coolness which the current of sultry air ill afforded. This accidental arrangement threw the light down upon her figure, as if the whole had been adjusted by the hand of a master for the picture of some dying saint. She lay, indeed, the very image of death, and, though still alive, her voice sounded as if it proceeded from the bottom of the grave. Her eye had lost none of its expression, though it had settled far back, in consequence, perhaps, of the apparent projection of her cheek-bones, stripped by sickness and sorrow of nearly all their flesh. The text "all flesh is grass," struck my thoughts as I looked on this withered herb, whom it had pleased God, for good purposes, to blight and bruise, though in her generation she had been virtuous, and deserv-

ing, as it might seem to our limited view, of a better end.

Having several times seen persons hovering on the verge which separates this world from the next, and knowing that too much agitation, even of a pleasureable kind, sometimes suddenly snaps the thread of life, I feared to deliver my message of comfort all at once. I began, therefore, by stating simply that I had been desired to call, in order to see how she was, and to ask if there was any assistance which could be given to her. The moment she heard her kind friend's name, she clasped her hands together, and turning her pale and emaciated face to me, breathed a sigh so deep that it made me shudder; this was followed by a slight hectic flush which passed across her countenance, though her eye lighted up in a wonderful manner—all the brighter, perhaps, for the circumjacent gloom—as the glow-worm shows brightest in the darkest night. Alas! there glowed nothing in this poor woman's breast now, but hopes of the world beyond the grave, though, I must add, the warmest gratitude for past favours from the quarter of which I was now the messenger of such comfort as this world had to bestow.

I could see, however, that she knew it to be of no avail. “She was alone—totally alone,” at length she contrived with no small effort to tell me. “Her

mother," she added with a look of horror which I shall never forget, "her own mother had left her that very morning to return to her own home, leaving her to die in the hands of strangers! Her son, too, (against whom she uttered not a word of reproach) had left her, his wife, and his child, all to perish together. Yet with all this," she continued, smiling through a tear or two which affection, much more touching than sorrow, had called up, "you will be pleased to see that God has not allowed me to be quite deserted." And looking round, called my attention to a female who, from the room being very dark except at one spot, I had not observed before, sitting silently weeping by the side of her couch. This person, an elderly lady like herself, no relation or connexion, but a most true friend, had, from a joint feeling of attachment and a strong sense of duty, devoted herself entirely to the desolate sufferer. A pause followed, as the friend leaned forward to kiss the dying woman's hand in acknowledgment of these grateful expressions.

By this time our sight had become accustomed to the faint light of the room, and I was struck with surprise on observing that even in this extremity of penury there was nothing squalid or locally wretched in the scene. The bed-linen and the lady's dress were not only clean but blanched

like snow, and everything else in the room bore the same traces of habitual good order and neatness.

I renewed the conversation by asking her if a small sum of money would be useful to her, since I was authorised to assist her in this way from time to time. At first she shook her head, as if to say that she had passed beyond the reach of such aid; but after a little reflection she said that as she had been obliged to sell most of her things to pay her rent, and to defray her weekly bills, she might be rendered more comfortable if she had other means of settling these matters. I had brought a small bag of money with me, containing twenty five-franc pieces, or about four pounds, which, though it may seem a small sum in England, is a large one in a Swiss village. I told her that if this was not enough, I had plenty more at home in her name, ready for her whenever she required it. I added that I should hold myself in readiness to come to her at any moment, if she should feel herself worse, or wish to see me on any business. She expressed herself pleased to have such assistance at hand, and spoke so much more firmly than before, that I thought I might now produce my credentials, and I accordingly gave her the letter of which I was the bearer. As her wasted fingers proved too weak even to open it, I unfolded the paper before

her, and she looked at it for some time, out said she had lost the power of reading, and that, in truth, all things around her were becoming dimmer and dimmer ! I really thought this was the haze or mist which frequently precedes a dissolution of all earthly ties. The fatal crisis, however, was not so near. Upon her begging me to read the letter I did so, very slowly, and with many a stop, to give the poor woman time for the utterance of her feelings. It struck me as curious that while all this time she shed no tears, those of her friend fell so copiously that I could hear them dropping on the sanded floor. Possibly the fountain of grief had been drained so deeply by all that had passed to wring her heart, that sorrow had no further means to express itself by this outlet.

I certainly expected that a relief so unlooked for, at such a moment, and accompanied by expressions of so much regard and confidence, might have opened springs long closed up. But it was not so ; she did better, however, by giving vent to her gratitude to God, in the most impassioned strains of piety I have ever heard—blaming no one but herself ! We felt much touched by this sudden burst of eloquence, and nearly joined company in tears with the distracted companion, who, losing all control, wept aloud.

After taking leave, I waited on the good doctor, on whom I found it difficult to force a fee, and learned from him that there was no hope either for the old lady herself, or for the poor little deserted grandchild; which of the two would die first he could not say, nor when; it might be a week, or a day, or an hour, before either of them left this world. He promised to write to me as things advanced, and also to let me know if I could be of any use, in my own person, or by the use of the funds placed in my hands.

I heard nothing for a few days, when, one morning, I received the following note from the doctor:

“I have the honour to tell you that the lady in whom you have interested yourself is much worse than when you saw her. She is very weak, and having fallen into the third stage of a pulmonary phthisis has not many days to live. Her granddaughter is also sinking fast.”

I made all haste to the village, but I was too late. The generous companion, who had never quitted the old lady's bedside, on hearing the carriage stop, ran down to meet me, and crying bitterly took me by the hand, and without saying a word led me to her friend's room. The door had been left half open, and we walked along on tip-toe, as softly as if a transient slumber, not the eternal repose of death, prevailed there. The small

quantity of light which entered the apartment came, as I have already described, from the upper part of a high window; it fell, however, no longer on the bed on which the body was laid—and which could now scarcely be distinguished in the shadow cast on it by a huge chest of drawers—but on the face of a young and pretty woman, dressed in rather a gay suit of mourning, preparatory to the funeral, which was to take place in an hour. A knot of gossips had assembled in an outer room to affect an interest in the deceased which they had omitted to show in her life-time, and this girl, who was one of the coterie, had arrived rather late and heated. On finding her hair disordered by the exercise, and being well acquainted with the localities of the house, and knowing where a mirror was hung, she had stolen quietly into the inner apartment, where the body was laid out. She there proceeded to arrange her head-gear, naturally imagining herself secure against interruption.

On entering the room I saw at once what was going on, for the glass, though it hung on the dark wall, faced me, and I could see in it all that was passing, while the young woman's back being turned towards the door, she herself remained unconscious of our scrutiny. The damp south-west wind had so uncurled her locks that she could by no means re-adjust them to her satisfaction, and I could detect

a look of rising displeasure as each fresh twist only made matters worse. At length, from some happy turn or other, the obstinate ringlets fell so agreeably into their places, that an unrepressed smile of entire satisfaction mantled over her face. I had been much amused by all this, and forgetting—as much as the young beauty had done—what other company was present, I laughed involuntarily, just loud enough to alarm the fair damsel, who turning round and blushing all over at being caught at her toilet within two yards of the couch of death, fell back into the shade behind the body.

My afflicted guide, apparently the only sincere mourner of the party, and too deeply affected to remark these random touches of human nature, continued pulling me along till we reached the bedside; she then lifted up the sheet which covered the face of her departed friend, and letting go my hand, flung herself on her knees, and resting her face on the cold and care-worn cheek of the heart-broken woman—now at last released from all her woes—she literally bathed it with tears. By the help of the pretended mourner of the ringlets, who by this time had reassumed the settled look of unfelt sympathy proper for the occasion, I raised the sincere mourner from the ground, but she refused to quit the spot.

In order, if I could, to change the current of

her grief, which of course I thought not of trying to stem, I remarked in as cheerful a tone as I could muster, that I was pleased to see an expression of satisfaction, amounting almost to a smile, on the countenance of her deceased friend.

“Ah, yes!” sobbed out the other, “she died happy, at peace with her God and her Saviour, in charity with all mankind,” and begging blessings and forgiveness for those whose conduct had torn her own heartstrings; “but to those,” continued she, “who had been kind to her, she knew not how to express one tithe of what she felt. The very last thing she said was,—that she had not believed it possible that anything on this side of the grave could in the least degree have repaired her broken spirit, but that the kind expressions and still kinder acts of her old mistress and friend who sent you to her, had not only soothed and comforted her, but had so entirely softened her heart towards others, as to leave her in charity with all mankind! As she spoke these words, she smiled, for the last time—just as you see her now—and in doing so she died!”

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF ENGLISH TRAVELLERS ABROAD, AND ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROTESTANT CHAPELS ESTABLISHED BY THEM AT DIFFERENT PLACES ON THE CONTINENT.

IT has been observed of the English that, wherever they go, they carry most of their habits and customs along with them, and in spite of uncongenial climates, and other adverse circumstances, keep up, in distant lands, the usages of their own country. This is, no doubt, true to a considerable extent, and for reasons which may be easily explained.

It has been my lot to visit countries where the English have settled themselves, either for life, to the entire abandonment of their native soil—as in the Canadas, the West Indies, and the Cape—or where they have been led by professional duty, or by motives of commercial interest, to fix themselves for a series of years, as in India, China, and South

America; or, finally, where they have gone only for a season, on the score of health, economy, or mere amusement,—or perhaps for the gratification of an enlightened curiosity, as in France, Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. I have seen something, too, of our soldiers and sailors in foreign parts; in the North American colonies, on the Mediterranean, at the Cape of Good Hope, the Isle of France, Ceylon, and the East Indies. Add to these the floating population of unsettled traders, who rove about the world, from “China to Peru,” with gold as steadily in their eye as ever it was in that of the Spaniards of old.

In all these species of the genus John Bull, and among some others which might be enumerated, I have observed the above remark to apply, with only such modifications as circumstances render unavoidable. Along with a good deal that is occasionally absurd in this adherence to their own national customs, there appears to be much more that is wise and useful in many ways. It is clear, at all events, that people always do those things best to which they have been most accustomed, and therefore if the manners and customs, and, above all, the principles of England, are better than those of other countries, it follows that it is by no means foolish, but, on the contrary, very wise in the English to keep up, as nearly as circumstances will

allow them, the greater part of their national peculiarities.

It would manifestly be absurd to maintain those particular customs abroad, which are decidedly unsuitable to foreign parts, merely because they happened to be in use at home. The Dutch, for example, selected for their chief town in Java the most unhealthy spot in the island; and moreover, as if to double its stock of mal' aria, they intersected it with canals, and all apparently for no other reason than that such was the custom in Holland. On the other hand, when the English took the island, they stationed their troops on higher ground, in spots known to be healthy: the result was, that the mortality amongst them was not a tenth part of what it had been amongst their predecessors.

Nevertheless, with these broad and obviously useful exceptions, I am quite sure that it is of importance to keep up as many of our usages as possible, which are not decidedly out of character with the climate and other new physical circumstances in which the strangers find themselves placed. I have observed of the English in particular, that when any of them sought to adapt themselves entirely to the habits of the natives, they generally contrived, with perverse ingenuity, to pick up those points of manners which were unsuitable to them, while they dropped others which

they certainly ought never on any account to have relinquished. In this, as in everything else, there seems nothing more essential to success than uniformity of purpose and consistency of character, and accordingly it may be observed, that when strangers, in the hope of conciliating the good-will of the inhabitants of the country in which they chance to be living, give up what is natural or habitual to them, even though it might seem to be in conformity to local practice, they lose instead of gain ground. Often, too, they lose it doubly; first, by giving up their own sense of right; and next, by exciting, more or less, the contempt of the very persons whose approbation they seek to gain.

It is the custom in England not only to go to church on Sunday, but to devote the day to congenial purposes—at all events, to make that day a season of bodily rest, and of mental tranquillity and reflection, rather than one of bustle, sight-seeing, and dissipation. But in countries where Sunday is either entirely neglected, or made the busiest day of the seven, will the inhabitants, however careless themselves in these matters, esteem those English the more who adopt their own fashion of making it a day of diversion?

It is needless to multiply such questions; for a very little reflection will show us that in such cases

there can be no doubt of the propriety, and even of the selfish policy—to put the matter upon its lowest grounds—of our adhering to those points in manners which we have been taught to consider so essentially bound up with our whole system of social obligations, that to detach any one of them, is to cast loose and set adrift the whole. Since no reasoning can be sound which seeks to justify any departure from principles duly sanctioned, so no motive ought to be strong enough to dislocate any system of conduct founded upon them. The old maxim “Do in Rome as the Romans do,” seduces many worthy persons to forget what they owe to themselves, in consideration of what they affect to fancy they owe to the Romans, but what, in truth, they merely find agreeable to themselves at the moment.

“But surely,” I have often heard people say, “there are many innocent customs which we might adopt with advantage and safety in Italy or France, but which are different from those to which we have been accustomed at home?” Perhaps it may be considered very prejudiced to say that the number of such usages is not great, and that such adoptions are seldom made, without a correspondent abandonment of our own habits, which, in the end, may leave us without those very advantages

which it was our chief, or at all events pretended, aim to secure.

There is no doubt that this must always be the result, sooner or later, when the question involves an abandonment of any point of principle; but even in cases where there is no such fatal sacrifice, it will generally happen that a failure ensues. And I believe the reason is, that in all such attempts at imitation there must inevitably be much of that want of keeping which springs out of ignorance of what we are doing. We adopt, for example, a certain foreign custom, under the belief that it will work well with us, because we see it work well with the natives. But we take no account, and can take none, of the multitude of other collateral circumstances which render it suitable and consistent for those to whom it is indigenious, but ridiculous, or even hurtful, for us who try to cultivate it, however repugnant to our own natural soil.

A professional simile may perhaps help to explain what I wish to express with respect to the wisdom of English travellers keeping up their own national character, as the best to work with in the long-run, instead of trying to imitate the more showy advantages of the places they visit.

Every ship of war is provided with a set of boats

called the launch, barge, cutter, gig; and jolly-boat, which may be taken to resemble the heavy, the plodding, and the useful, among our travellers, as well as the brisk and the gay. Now it happens that wherever our ships go, they find—at first to the great mortification of the crew—that the native boats beat theirs so decidedly in speed, or in some other quality, that the sailors sometimes make the most strenuous but awkward efforts to accommodate their own boats to the new climate. These attempts generally fail from the essential differences in their structure. Thus, the boats of Bermuda, contrived for the wants of a tempestuous latitude, are sunk deep in the water by loads of ballast; while the canoes of Ceylon are put together and rigged like the nautilus, so as to skim the surface of the sea, with sails of disproportionate size.

The respective advantages of these native boats, however, furnish no professional argument for changing the rig or build of those of our men-of-war. Were they fitted to match the “wreckers” of Bermuda, they would be useless when the ship went to Ceylon, and *vice versa*. Besides, it is found that wherever the ship may be ordered, from the equator to the arctic or antarctic circles, or on whatever service, her boats are so well devised, in the main, as to be able to perform far better average work than any that have been tried; and

thus, in the long-run, they acquire a character for efficiency in real service which strongly indisposes officers of experience to allow of any change at all in their structure.

I remember travelling on the Continent (in 1818) just two-and-twenty years ago, before things had settled into their places after the disorganisation caused by the war, and wondering to see how completely adrift, and without those habits of mental discipline to which they had been accustomed, our worthy citizens were rambling about. Though I cared less about the matter then than I do now, I can recollect being struck with alarm at the probable consequences. I feel well assured, indeed, that but for the generous and high-principled exertions which have been made of late years by the friends of good order and true lovers of English manners, whose exertions raised up and afterwards maintained the Church of England chapels abroad, especially those at Paris, Geneva, and Rome, the consequences must have been most disastrous to our national character.

The practical influence of these establishments in steadying the wavering, recalling those who had broken adrift, and in confirming the well-disposed to act up to what they knew to be right, has been much greater than persons could believe, unless they had lived for some time on the

Continent. Let any one who has doubts of their beneficial effect reside alternately for a few months at places where, unfortunately, no such means of instruction and correction exist, and at others where travellers have the means of grace provided for them. He will then learn how essentially people are influenced by being periodically and forcibly reminded of their duty, and how prone all people are to fall under discipline, whenever that discipline is exercised with firmness and discretion, and, above all, with consistency. In those places, on the other hand, where there is no such leader, and where every one is left to his own devices, it will be found that the novelty and brilliancy of foreign pretensions, mixed up, no doubt, with much that is quite innocent, and, it may be, praiseworthy, but also with a great deal that is vicious, very often prove an overmatch for the unassisted simplicity of what is called the humdrum of English manners.

On such occasions the inexperienced indulge in many a witty tirade against the coldness, formality, and reserve of their own country, which they delight in contrasting with the animation, suavity, and ease of the Continent, omitting to examine whether or not these qualities have anything to recommend them beyond the gracefulness of outward show, and may, therefore, be purchased too dearly.

It would be needless to give an account of all the efforts which have been made by our countrymen abroad to preserve inviolate those religious habits of thought and action upon which their happiness here and hereafter depends; but I think a short notice of what has been done at the two most important stations—viz. Geneva and Rome—may possess both interest and utility. In this undertaking I am happy to have the assistance of my accomplished friend the Rev. Richard Burgess, now rector of Upper Chelsea; for no person has contributed more by his own exertions to the establishment of English chapels abroad, or is more familiar with all that has taken place or is now passing on the Continent respecting them.

It is a proof of the attachment of the English to their own institutions wherever they go, that as soon as the continent of Europe was thrown open, and British subjects might reside safely in its cities, they turned their attention, whenever they were in sufficient numbers, to the establishment of divine worship; and it further shows the prevalence of regard for the national religion, that almost all those establishments so formed by voluntary efforts were originally, and have continued to remain, *Church of England* chapels.

In some places considerable difficulties have been experienced in the formation of those institutions.

The want of funds for obtaining a suitable edifice, the opposition and suspicion of the civil authorities, the scarcity of clergymen, and the difficulty of supplying them with even a scanty income, besides many other impediments which might be mentioned, have operated against the exertions of a few well-disposed persons to form churches in those cities to which but a small number of English resort. Hence at Berne, Vevay, and several other places in Switzerland, where the British residents are found in small numbers, they remain, unfortunately, without any regular English worship. Geneva was one of those places which offered the greatest facilities; and as soon as the road to that celebrated city was open, it was crowded with English visitors, who in a little time spread themselves along the border of its splendid lake. Before ten years elapsed, they had introduced the luxuries (and perhaps some of the follies) of their country into that economical republic. As early as 1814-15 the English chapel at Geneva was begun. At that period there happened to be residing in the neighbourhood a clergyman of the Church of England, now the eminent and esteemed Bishop of Winchester, the Right Reverend Charles Richard Sumner. On observing a number of his countrymen "scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd," he offered his professional services, which

were gladly accepted, and divine worship, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, was then begun at Geneva.

A memorial addressed to the Council of State, and signed by a great number of British noblemen and gentlemen, set forth the wishes of the English residents at Geneva, and begged that some edifice might be granted to them for the purpose of public worship. Communications were also held with the British envoy at Berne to obtain his sanction to the memorial; and the result was, that the Geneva Council of State, with the consent of the Directors of the general Hospital, granted the use of the chapel attached to that institution, for twenty-one years. It was merely suggested that the English service should be so ordered as not to interfere with that of the Genevese congregation, and accordingly, ever since the year 1815, the British residents have enjoyed the free use of the hospital chapel for their Sunday worship. As a suitable return for this favour, the English congregation, by means of a collection made after an annual sermon preached by the chaplain, have contributed from £30 to £40 per annum to the hospital. It is to be observed, that the civil institutions of Geneva allow a free and full toleration for every kind of Christian worship; so that the great difficulties experienced in Italy and other Roman Catholic countries in estab-

lishing a Protestant chapel were not met with at Geneva.

The Rev. Mr. Sumner, who continued his gratuitous services for some time, was succeeded by an amiable clergyman in the person of the Rev. George Rooke, rector of Yardley-Hastings, in Northamptonshire, who happened at that time to be travelling on the Continent. A committee was formed for the purpose of collecting subscriptions and donations to meet the incidental expenses attending divine worship, and to pay the chaplain a salary of 200 francs (or about £8) a month. Large families using the chapel for the season, or for the whole year, were expected to pay 40 francs; smaller families, 20 francs; but as the revenue arising from these subscriptions was found insufficient, it was thought expedient to collect, also, the donations of casual attendants at the church-door every Sunday during the season. By this means the committee have been enabled to pay a chaplain in later years 250 francs, or £10 a month. More than this the voluntary system cannot produce. It has often been imagined by English travellers attending such chapels as those of Geneva, Lausanne, Rome, and Florence, that the English government contributes something towards their maintenance; but this is an error. According to the Consular Act, passed in the reign of George IV.*, consuls are authorised

* 6th of George IV., chap. 37, § 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

to pay a chaplain, in those ports or places where such *consuls or vice-consuls reside*, a sum equal to the amount of voluntary subscriptions, provided the whole do not exceed in Europe £500, or out of Europe £800. The English chapels at Genoa, Naples, Nice, &c., are therefore placed under the Consular Act; but in all other places where there is no resident consul or vice-consul, those establishments are provided entirely by the voluntary contributions of the British residents. The committee is nothing more than a certain number of persons appointed by the body of contributors for the purpose of selecting a chaplain and raising the funds for his maintenance, and supplying the chapel with things necessary for divine worship. The gentleman who has for so many years presided over the Genevan committee is Charles M. Lullin, Esq., who long held office in England, and whose well-known courtesy to all strangers, and unremitted attention to the interests of the chapel, have deserved the grateful acknowledgments of successive chaplains, and met with the general approbation of the British residents.

The Rev. George Rooke, who became chaplain at Geneva in 1815, continued for six years in that capacity, and then resigned for the purpose of returning to his living at home. Upon his resignation, a successor was proposed by some members of the committee; but the nomination not being approved

of by the rest, a series of unpleasant discussions took place, which, in the end, excited so much notice, that the Genevese Council of State felt it right to remonstrate, and the dispute was terminated by the Rev. Mr. Rooke agreeing to remain a little longer in his situation.

In consequence of these proceedings, a resolution was drawn up at a very numerous meeting to the following effect:—“That no chaplain shall henceforth be appointed unless approved by the Bishop of London, and without bringing to the committee a testimonial to that effect; which, after being examined and approved, shall be transmitted to the Council of State at Geneva; and that the said Council be petitioned by the committee to take cognizance of the same, and to confirm by their authority the appointment of such chaplain;—the committee being assured by such precaution that the English chaplain will limit his exertions within the proper sphere of his duties.”

The Council of State agreed to exercise this authoritative function, and thus a double security was henceforth given for the respectability and discretion of the chaplain. The Rev. J. Barrow, late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and now rector of South Lopham, Norfolk, having conformed to all the committee's regulations, was appointed to succeed Mr. Rooke.

“I happened,” continues Mr. Burgess, “to be residing at Geneva during the year Mr. Barrow remained, and frequently assisted him in the service. On the resignation of that gentleman, in October 1823, I had the satisfaction of being unanimously elected to the chaplaincy, which I retained till May 1836, on the 8th day of which month I preached my farewell sermon, after having been nominally chaplain for nearly thirteen years. The congregation, however, at Geneva being reduced in winter to a dozen or fifteen families, and a few young men living ‘en pension,’ I obtained leave from the committee, after I had officiated for three years, to go away for the winter, on condition of providing a substitute, to be approved by the committee. This gave me an opportunity of taking the chaplaincy for the winter season at Rome also. I had the satisfaction of knowing that the various gentlemen who had the kindness to act in the capacity of my substitute, successively received the thanks of the committee and the congregation for their exertions.”

“The Rev. John Hartley, whose zeal in the cause of religion on the Continent is well known, was the clergyman most frequently chosen to officiate in my absence during the winter. At one time the duties of the chaplaincy devolved entirely upon Mr. Hartley; and it was in this capacity, in my

absence in 1835, that he attended the synod of pastors assembled to celebrate the third centenary of the Reformation, and there protested against the errors of the Genevese church, charging its ministers with having abandoned the great doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, and the Agency of the Holy Spirit. This bold attack upon the Genevan clergy was hailed with joy by many clergymen in England; but it had such an effect upon the Genevese themselves as to prevent Mr. Hartley from again becoming the officiating chaplain at that place. The Rev. Charles Hutton, previously chaplain at Florence, succeeded next; and after him, the Rev. Mr. Hare, formerly of Leghorn, who is now the chaplain at Geneva, and receives a limited number of pupils.

“The influence of the English chapel at Geneva,” remarks Mr. Burgess, “has not been confined to the British residents, for an occasion arose in which it afforded an asylum to some of the Genevese pastors and others who conscientiously left the communion of their once renowned but now fallen church.”

“For information respecting the establishment of the *Société Evangélique*,” he adds, “and many other particulars regarding the recent history of religion at Geneva, I must refer you to a memoir I have written, and which is published in

a work edited by the Rev. E. Bickersteth, entitled ‘A Voice from the Alps.’* I may remark here, in passing, that there can be no doubt that the standard of sound doctrine constantly held up by the Church-of-England chapel at Geneva must be reckoned among the causes of a revival of the orthodox faith which has taken place in the church of that city. The influence which the institution has had upon the English themselves will be gathered better from the observation of others than from the officiating clergyman.”

I need only add that, by the concurrent testimony both of the English residents and of those whose stay has been limited, the resulting effect on our countrymen by these genuine labours of love has been to keep up those habits and principles which we suppose form the essential and most valuable characteristics of our country.

* The title at length of this exceedingly interesting and important little book is, “A Voice from the Alps, or a brief account of the Evangelical Societies of Paris and Geneva; with a view of the present prospects of religion in Europe, contained in several addresses, by M.^r Merle d’Aubigné, author of the History of the Reformation. Edited by the Rev. E. Bickersteth, Rector of Walton, Herts. Published by R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, London, 1838.”

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE ENGLISH PROTESTANT CHAPEL AT ROME
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHEVALIER BUN-
SEN'S HOSPITAL ON THE TARPEIAN ROCK.

WITH respect to the rise, progress, and final establishment of the still more important Church-of-England chapel at Rome, I cannot do better than extract the account given by the same high authority, from which I have already borrowed so copiously. In the preface to his admirable lectures on the insufficiency of unrevealed religion, delivered at the English chapel at Rome, Mr. Burgess has discussed this matter fully. I thought at one time of abridging his account, but I soon found that this would be doing injustice not merely to the accomplished author but to the great subject of which he treats. I may say also that one of the chief charms of this singular narrative lies not less in the details than in the general results—to say nothing of its masterly composition and its other intrinsic attractions. Independently, indeed, of

the more serious considerations which are involved in this topic—especially the influence which the well-being of an English Protestant Establishment may be supposed to have on the cause of true religion, at the head-quarters of Roman Catholicism—the following account possesses an interest of its own, which every one will understand who has had the happiness to make a personal acquaintance with the author. To him, indeed, the astonishing success of the English chapel at Rome—humanly speaking—is almost entirely due.*

* Although Mr. Burgess's published lectures were not so generally known in England as they deserved to be, or as they were abroad, I ought to state that not only the lectures, but the preface which introduces them, and which I here give at length, did strongly engage the attention and approbation of his clerical brethren in this country. The following extract from the *British Critic* for April 1837 will prove this. My purpose, however, is to call the attention of those persons in whose direct way such things do not lie, but to whom they are essentially as interesting, and every whit as important, as they can be to the professed labourers in the vineyard of which we all hope to taste the fruit.

Thus writes the reviewer of Mr. Burgess's book: "Mr. Burgess deserves the warmest eulogium for the wisdom and prudent conciliativeness with which he discharged the duties of his chaplainship. Had he shown a misguided zeal in an attempt to make his church a nucleus of Protestantism to which to attract the floating elements of scepticism and indecision that are to be found even in the bosom of the Romans (and that by an ostentatious machinery), instead of being so useful he had been mischievous to the cause of his Master. And yet there was no compromise, no unfaithfulness, in his public ministry. We might make many extracts from his lectures of calm, shrewd discussion of points of

Mr. Burgess has lately been removed to a spot where a wider sphere of action is opened to his piety, zeal, and industry; a change of position which, while it will long be regretted both by poor and rich at Rome, is a source of high satisfaction to every true lover of the church.

“The existence of a Protestant chapel at Rome,” says Mr. Burgess, “where the service of the Church of England is regularly performed during six months of the year, is of itself a circumstance worthy of attention; for whether it be viewed as a striking instance of religious toleration, coming in an unexpected direction, or as the means of softening those prejudices which the comprehensive term of heretic conveys to the vulgar, it cannot fail to be an object of interest to every one who espouses the cause of civil and religious liberty. The institution is already known to a considerable number of British subjects, who will know how to appreciate the concession which prepared for them the privilege of joining in the public worship of the Church of England at

controversy between Papists and Protestants, introduced without a violent interruption of the unity of his discourse, and prosecuted without rancour. But he felt, and justly too, that an unobtrusive but active exhibition of Christian philanthropy would do more than the most boisterous dogmatism. He therefore diligently cultivated in his flock the habits of benevolence.”—*British Critic, Quarterly Theological Review, and Ecclesiastical Record*, No. XLII., April 1837, page 440.

Rome ; but it is far from being generally understood that such an act of liberality has proceeded from the councils of the Vatican ! The author thinks that every example of religious toleration, come from what quarter it may, is an accession to the cause of truth ; and, if there be any merit in those who have overcome prejudice, or who have even made their policy conformable to means which may enable others so to do, it is due to them to acknowledge and commend such liberality in the face of civilised society ; for religious toleration, not otherwise than mercy, “ is twice blessed ; ” it blesses those that give and those that take.

“ The English chapel may now be considered as having the sanction of the papal government, although no official grant has yet been made which would ever acknowledge its existence.

“ As early as the winter of 1816-17 English families began to reside in Rome in sufficient numbers to require a house for public worship ; considerable difficulty was then experienced in procuring an apartment to be dedicated to such a purpose ; the object was new, alarming, and contrary to the existing laws ; but at length, through the influence of Signor Luigi Chiaveri, to whom the English have often been indebted for his kind offices in this respect, a private room was obtained, near the column of Trajan ; and thus began the

service of the reformed Church of England in the ‘Holy City!’ The duties were discharged by any clergyman who, happening to be present, had the zeal to offer his gratuitous services: the necessary expenses were defrayed by the voluntary contributions of the congregation, and the slender funds administered by the kindness of Lieutenant-General Ramsay.

“As no permission had been obtained from the authorities (for such a demand must necessarily have been met by a refusal), the new “conventicle” owed its existence entirely to the forbearance of the government. But it was not clear whether such mildness might not soon have to yield to the more austere interpreters of the law, and it is said that the attention of a high dignitary, attracted by the concourse of vehicles during divine service, had nearly proved fatal. There can, indeed, be no doubt that some representation was formally made of the illegality and danger of permitting such an unheard-of assembly, and a word from the Vatican at that moment might have dissolved the elements of it without doing much violence to the opinion of any one. The enlightened and liberal Gonzalvi, however, perceiving who and what the English were at Rome in the nineteenth century, and recollecting that Catholic Ireland still laboured under civil disabilities, would know nothing of an

illegal assembly in the Forum of Trajan, and that assembly duly appreciated his liberality.

“It is not to be supposed there was any intention on the part of the civil authorities to introduce the principle of religious toleration into the city of Rome; such a supposition would be little less than an impeachment of the minister; nor did the appearance of a new kind of worship work wonders in the sentiments of the listless multitude; but it had the effect of making some of them suspect that heresy, according to the definition they had heard of it, might not be altogether synonymous with infidelity; and the very circumstance of choosing a ‘festival’ (Sunday) for the day of worship showed at least some traces of church authority. It was soon discovered by the most intelligent of the lower orders, to which, of course, these remarks apply, that the English had a sort of Mass of their own, and the solemnity observable in their manner of attending to it was archly compared with the careless genuflexions of the Roman signori. In this manner the forbearance of the government was transfused into the minds of such of the populace as thought at all on the subject: it was not provided that it should be so, it was a natural consequence. During the first two or three seasons, such may be considered to have been the secret moral influence of the English congregation, and

the most zealous guardians of pontifical authority had nothing to fear, nor it is to be hoped ever will, from any overt acts of proselytism on the part of the officiating ministers. The protection afforded to the new congregation, although but a negative one, had been hitherto sufficient for all practical purposes; but it was still equivocal; and when the old apartment could no longer be procured, it was not possible to induce a private individual to incur the responsibility of becoming the new landlord, as the displeasure of the authorities might be incurred. There was something which still required explanation; a public assembly of this nature, in the house of a Roman citizen, might cause him to be placed at the bar of the Inquisition;* at the same time a semi-official intimation was given that great caution and privacy should be observed by the English in the exercise of their privilege. It would, however, have required a very vigorous execution of the law to prevent a foreigner who had already his 'own hired house' from inviting his countrymen to a private assembly; and

* "This word must not be allowed to convey to the reader any false notions. The Inquisition at Rome (although contrary in *principle* to all our ideas of religious liberty) is, at this time, a mild tribunal in its *administration*; some cases of injustice there must necessarily be, but it is of no use to deal in misrepresentation."

under this form (it must be confessed a pretext) divine service was celebrated in a commodious room in the *Vicolo degli Avignonesi*, situated near the site of the ancient circus of *Flora* ! Thus did the Protestant congregation migrate from *Trajan's Forum* to the opposite declivity of the *Quirinal Hill*. The privacy suggested by the Secretary of State was, perhaps, the best method of co-operating with his benevolent intentions ; a motive less dignified may not be imputed to the virtuous mind of *Pope Pius VII.* At that period it would not have been difficult to outrage the feelings of many devout plebeians by an over-ready sanction of the nonconformity. Evident marks of pious indignation had been more than once observed in the populace at the sight of the Protestant bier ; and although the more enlightened portion of the community were far from joining in this display of superstition, it shows that if a less liberal policy with regard to the English worship had been adopted by the government it would not have been at variance with the popular feeling ; that it was not adopted does honour to the memory of *Pius VII.* and his minister. But ten years have been sufficient to change that feeling as much in favour of the institution as ever it could be against the precarious assembly ; and it is now, (1831) per-

haps, regarded by that same populace as the surest pledge of those advantages which they expect to reap from the presence of the English.

“In the autumn of the year 1822, the author first took a share in endeavouring to promote the welfare of the establishment. It was his good fortune to meet on that occasion with a reverend person, now, alas, no more ! but whose name is entitled to hold the chief place in this narration. Whatever benefit may finally result from the institution in question (and it is only intended to speak here of that benefit which consists in a mutual removal of religious strife and prejudice, in which Rome will surely be the gainer), the name of the Rev. Joseph Cooke is continually to be kept in remembrance*. By his zeal, tempered with discretion and judgment, and by his exertions (in which the author of the following lecture took but a small part), two essential steps were taken and secured ;

* “Mr. Cooke (late Fellow of Christ’s College, Cambridge) was a man of great literary accomplishments, mingled with solid piety, and devotion to his profession. His ardent pursuit of knowledge led him to undertake a journey into the East, in 1825, and he appears to have sunk under the fatigue of it ; he died suddenly whilst sitting upon his dromedary, in a mountain-pass, called Ras Wady Hebran, about half way between the convent of St. Catherine and Tor, five miles north of Mount Serbal. He was interred by a Greek Papas, in consecrated ground, near the Twelve Wells of Elim and the Palm Grove. May this tribute of respect for the memory of a good man survive the fleeting pages which contain it !”

first, an apartment was hired, avowedly for the celebration of divine service; and secondly, the connivance of the authorities was made equivalent to a sanction. The English worship then first assumed the nature of an establishment; it was held in the Corea Palace, situated in the Via Pontifice, close to the mausoleum of Augustus. The number of winter residents had now greatly augmented, the congregation consisting of not less than two hundred persons, and the assemblage of equipages could not fail to attract the attention of the public.

“ It was not long before a cry of alarm was raised amidst these proceedings, and the infant institution again trembled for its existence. The officiating ministers were accused of intemperate zeal; a conference was held with an influential personage*, and a positive interference of the executive power was now apprehended. This led to the formation of a committee, to be called upon in case of necessity, to act in the name and on the behalf of the English residents, there being no diplomatic minister at the court of Rome†. But the policy and

* The Duchess of Devonshire.

† The names of the gentlemen who formed this committee are as follows :—The Earl Compton, now Marquis of Northampton; Rev. Robert Markham, Archdeacon of York; Sir. W. Watkins Wynn, Bart.; Dr., now Sir James, Clarke; Rev. Joseph Cooke; Rev. Richard Burgess, to act and, if necessary, remonstrate, with the papal authorities.

good sense of Cardinal Gonzalvi were proof against all weak remonstrances, and it was at length intimated to the officiating ministers, that no obstacle would be offered to their temperate proceedings. Encouraged by this protection, Mr. Cooke, by means of a public subscription, procured the necessary appendages for a place of worship; the church books could only be obtained through the kindness of Mr. Hamilton, British minister at Naples; a beadle was also appointed, with authority to collect the subscriptions; and thus the winter of 1822-3 may be regarded as the commencement of the institution.

“The attention of the Protestants resident at Rome had already been directed to the waste-ground allotted for burying their dead. Beyond the Aventine Mount, and under the walls of the city within, stood a few scattered tomb-stones, exposed to the trampling of the cattle grazing in the Prato del Popolo, and to the still greater injury of human footsteps. Decency seemed to require that the graves which had just grown green, should be secured from further encroachment, and that the few monuments should not be allowed to fall into ruins. A subscription to a considerable amount was collected, for the purpose of carrying the design into effect; but upon application to the competent authorities, it was alleged, that a wall

would obstruct the view of the pyramid of Caius Cestius; and that the trees, which the friends of the deceased loved to plant round the tombs, had already begun the mischief. This answer being received, and no further hopes of success held out, the money subscribed was returned to the original donors, and the circumstance made an unfavourable impression abroad, of the toleration of the papal government. In a discussion of the Catholic claims in the House of Lords, a noble lord, an opposer of these claims, was not slow to cite this as a remarkable instance of Roman Catholic intolerance. It is not clear that it was so; but the act of toleration in permitting the English service, which was evident, ought not to have been passed over in silence; it perhaps might not have been known. The discussion in the British senate was not, however, unheeded in the Vatican council; for, during that very summer, and entirely at the expense of the ‘Apostolic Chamber,’ a sunk fence was dug round the old burial-place; another eligible spot of ground beyond the pyramid was surrounded by a solid wall, and henceforth assigned for the Protestant cemetery. It only remained to secure and build up the sunk fence, for which work permission was now readily obtained, and the year following, the English, in conjunction with the German Protestants, not only secured the old

burial-ground, but also raised a fund of a thousand dollars, which yields annually a sum sufficient to keep the whole in repair, and procure the services of a sexton. ‘The senate and the Roman people’ have a prescriptive right over all that ground about the Monte Testaccio, called the Prato del Popolo; a fee of about two pounds is, therefore, demanded for every interment which takes place. No one will be inclined to consider this extravagant; but the fine (amounting to an equal sum) which is paid into the criminal court of the cardinal vicar, awakens a different feeling, and will no doubt be abolished, whenever the government of Rome shall have time to attend to minor abuses. In the mean time the cemetery is placed under the protection of the Prussian minister; and those who have to lament the loss of friends interred under the walls of Rome, may at least have this poor consolation, that their bones repose in a becoming security, and their monuments excite a sympathetic sigh in the breast of many a northern pilgrim!

“In the year following the grant of the new burial-ground, the author had the great satisfaction of again co-operating with Mr. Cooke, in the service of the chapel: it was found impracticable to secure the same apartments for a second season, the apprehension of giving offence to the ecclesiastical authorities having not yet been done away.

The excellent 'Pius VII. was now no more, and Leo XII. had only appeared as a disciplinarian. After the two first Sundays of the season, the term in the Corea Palace expired, and the congregation of 1823-4 seemed to be dispossessed of all its former privileges. But the precedent having been established, should another situation be to be found in any part of Rome, it could not be thought a more rash experiment than the former had been, were it put in the same requisition. After some difficulty, two commodious rooms were procured in the Via Rasella, a street which lies nearly under the garden wall of the Quirinal Palace, the occasional residence of the pope. The adopting of this situation will appear nothing extraordinary to those who are acquainted with Rome: and if the new government had been capable of taking offence at a meeting of heretics, because it had approached so near the precincts of the papal gardens, it would equally have discovered the blemish upon the 'Holy City' in a more remote 'rione;' but Leo XII., whose wisdom as a sovereign has been too little appreciated, and his piety too much disparaged, reasoned like a statesman. 'It is much better,' said the 'holy father,' 'to permit the continuance of this assembly; for, if it be prohibited, the English cannot be prevented from meeting in small numbers at their own private abodes; and

thus, instead of one such congregation, we shall have twenty.' It had not, probably, escaped the notice of Leo XII., that the English chapel had not yet shared in those wholesome regulations which were introduced by him, for preserving the internal order of the city. The weekly assemblage of carriages at a stated time and place, could not fail to attract the curiosity of the Roman people, which the presence of a police-officer might easily restrain without any application on the part of the officiating clergyman; and without any previous intimation from any quarter, Mr. Cooke and the author were not more surprised than rejoiced to find, upon arriving to perform the morning service, two sentinels stationed at the chapel door. The carriages had all disappeared from their usual rendezvous, in consequence of a general order of the police: a more than common silence pervading the neighbourhood of the Via Rasella, it was now evident the authorities had at length interfered, but they interfered for the protection of the English congregation. To Pope Leo XII., then, they are indebted for this great privilege, which may be said to have thus received his sanction in January 1824. Thus encouraged, and being assured from a private communication, that it was the intention of the government to allow the English the free exercise of their worship; the officiating ministers now

performed divine service in their canonical robes. The propriety of making some suitable return for this privilege was next suggested, and hence the origin of the charitable fund, which will be mentioned in the sequel.

“The spiritual duties of the chapel were gratuitously discharged, and all clergymen of the Established Church, who happened to be at Rome, were invited to contribute their services: the rent of the apartment and incidental expenses were supplied by voluntary subscription, the administration of which fund gradually became the business of the committee, which had been originally formed for the purposes before-mentioned. The author cannot let pass this opportunity of acknowledging the important and continued exertions of the Marquis of Northampton, and the laudable services of Dr. (now Sir James) Clarke, author of the ‘Influence of Climate,’ during his long residence in Rome.

“The number of British travellers in Italy increased so greatly, that the rooms in the Via Rasella were far from being sufficiently large for the Protestant Anglo-Roman congregation, nor was their site one of the most convenient. Accordingly in the year 1824-25, the committee exerted itself to find a place at once more appropriate and more permanent: it was desirable to fix the wandering

congregation, which had now almost made the circuit of the Campus Martius. During the first few weeks of the season, the anxiety of former years was renewed ; but at length, after diligent inquiry, the capacity of a chapel was discovered in a large granary, near the Porta del Popolo : it became expedient to have a lease of a building which must needs be fitted up at considerable expense, before it could answer the purpose. The income, however, necessary for defraying the yearly rent, depending on the contingency of future congregations, there were no funds to answer any engagement beyond the year. The committee was relieved from this embarrassment by the generous and patriotic offer of a distinguished statesman *, who guaranteed the payment of the rent for three years in case of the English ceasing, from any unforeseen cause during that period, to resort to Rome. The institution was not less indebted on that occasion to the professional services of the Rev. J. Hugh Rose.

“ It has been supposed by many, that the chapel was removed without the walls of the city at the instance of the civil authorities, which is an erroneous notion, and ought in justice to be corrected. The government approved of the situation, but the committee were not controlled in choice of it.

* The Earl of Harrowby.

Indeed, it would have been hardly possible to have procured within the city walls a room sufficiently commodious, and in every other respect so convenient for the large congregation, which is now to be seen in the English chapel, upon which, at different periods, not less than a sum of £250 has been expended in bringing it to its present form. The author has witnessed as many as five hundred and fifty persons within its walls; and those who have seen it since the year 1829, will agree that there is nothing wanting in it for all the purposes of a Church-of-England congregation.

“ During the two succeeding winters the duties of the chapel were discharged, as before, by the gratuitous services of clergymen casually resident at Rome; but in the year 1827, the committee decided to ensure the performance of the regular duty by erecting it into a chaplaincy, their finances enabling them to offer a salary of £100 per annum.

“ In considering the happy influence gradually effected in the minds of the common people by the growth of this institution, the charitable fund already alluded to is an important feature. It consisted at first of the alms collected for the holy communion, which in the former seasons amounted to a comparatively small sum. In Mr. Cooke’s first year the sum total was about one hundred and fifty dollars; it increased every succeeding season,

together with the number of communicants, until it reached in the year 1826 and 1827 the sum of £100. Cases of distressed British subjects being very rare at Rome, the whole of this fund was applied to the relief of the Italian paupers; in 1827 and 1828 it grew into still greater importance.

“The number of applicants, as may be easily imagined, was by far too heavy for the funds; about two hundred names were already inscribed in the list, which reduced the monthly relief to a very small pittance, so that, without either diminishing the number of pensioners, or increasing the funds for a more generous relief of the whole, the charity was in danger of promoting mendicity, rather than adapted to the effectual succour of the deserving indigent, and the encouragement of honest industry. It was only necessary to make the circumstances known to decide upon the alternative. The chaplain had recourse to the means of a charity sermon, which was preached on the 30th of March 1828, and was the cause of nearly £120 being added to the stock. The alms collected at the altar were proportionally increased, so that in the course of this season 1200 dollars (£270) was distributed in monthly relief; and this, independently of private donations, in some special cases, which did not appear upon the

charity books. The rumour of English munificence now ran through the habitations of misery, the parish priests were assailed for official signatures to the numerous petitions, which set forth, in all the varied eloquence of the Italian language, the miseries of poverty and disease. The successful candidates extolled too highly the ‘alms-giving nation,’ and gave the less fortunate false notions of its eleemosynary deeds. The rule to be observed by the administrators of the funds was simple. It was to calculate how many families might be effectually relieved during the winter months, and then make the selection from such recommendations and knowledge of the cases, as made out the best title to their consideration, the names already on the list having of course the first claim to investigation; but since written recommendations were sometimes too easily procured, the chaplain, whose business it had now become to dispense the charity of his congregation, could hardly discharge the duty conscientiously without a personal verification of the varied pretensions, to accomplish which task it was necessary to visit one hundred and fifty abodes of poverty. In this manner the charity books were made conformable to the increased resources, and by a careful distribution the whole was adequate to the relief of about two hundred and thirty families. This may

suffice, without entering into ‘the annals of the poor,’ or the affecting narratives of decayed nobility, to give the reader an idea of the nature and extent of British charity at Rome. Let him not say that it ‘begins at home,’ for this will not add one gift more to the domestic ‘treasury,’ and it might take from the ‘*poveri vergognosi* :’ let him lament (if it seems reasonable) the temporary absence of his fellow-citizens ; but if the Samaritan *does* ‘journey in the wilderness,’ it is better not to imitate the priest and the Levite. And if it be expedient for a strange community, enjoying the advantages of a foreign country, and receiving the hospitable protection of its government, to make any return, there can be none more suitable than when, partaking of the local privileges, to share proportionally the burden of alleviating the local distresses.

“In the year 1828-29, the sum-total of the charity fund fell a little short of the preceding year, and since that period it has, from unavoidable circumstances, decreased ; nor can it ever be expected to exceed the year of the first charity sermon, if even it ever reaches an equal amount. But it has already procured the only recompense which was at all desirable for a Protestant congregation. A number of grateful souls have come to the conclusion, that the English must really be

Christians: nor is it one of the least remarkable things, that the Jews should be admitted to a share of this charity. A learned Rabbi, encouraged by the impartial benevolence of the English congregation, represented to the author the misery and poverty of the Ghetto*, and wondered whether the despised Jews could ever find a drop of pity in the breast of a Christian. Upon being told, that in dispensing of English charity there was no distinction of persons, and that the superior claim came only from the greater weight of misery, the Israelite rejoiced, and considered the sum of five pounds given during the week of the Passover as an ample confirmation of ‘the good report.’ This was repeated in subsequent years, and the English bounty was dispensed in unleavened bread through the squalid habitations of this unprivileged people.

“If the incidents here related appear trifling, the result is at least extraordinary; — a Protestant cemetery, a Church-of-England service, and a charitable fund, dispensed at a reformed altar to the devoted subjects of the ‘Sovereign Pontiff.’

“Those who are curious about the signs of the times will easily admit these into the number; but the philosophical reader, who has contemplated the spirit of a Hildebrand, or even the precocious

* The Jews’ quarter of Rome goes by the name of the “Ghetto.”

tolerance of a Ganganelli, will rather see in it this maxim, that neither kings nor priests have power against the general opinion of mankind. Concession to that opinion may be mere expediency, whilst the principle of opposition to it remains the same ; but such expediency is, in matters of state-policy, wisdom ; and, in religion, becomes toleration. The object of this memoir is to acknowledge the latter in four successive pontiffs of Rome. Under these impressions, the author will not run the risk of offending either Rome or her ‘partisans.’ He will only express a hope, that the emulation which has been excited in the vicinity of the English congregation, may never go beyond the only legitimate means of opposition, viz. argument and persuasion : nor will it, on the other hand, ever be expected to restrain the weaker portion of the community from gratifying an innocent curiosity.”

Up to the season of 1836-37, the Rev. R. Burgess, whose narrative I have given above, continued in charge of the chapel at Rome, and he conducted it with such exemplary skill, and with so much good feeling towards all parties,—even towards the most bigoted of his Roman Catholic opponents, that not only was no ill-will engendered against the heretical English residents, but a daily

increasing good-will on the part of the government and people of Rome was manifested towards the English residents there. It is true that about a fortnight before Mr. Burgess finally left Rome, an English or Irish Roman Catholic priest, I do not know which, published a pamphlet in very bad style and much worse taste, in which he pretended to criticise Mr. Burgess' Lectures and Travels in Greece, published some years previously in London. Placards were posted all over Rome, announcing the appearance of this pamphlet, which contained, besides the feeble attempt at criticism, several personal attacks upon the English chaplain, designed to bring him into odium with the authorities; but it completely failed, so that even the English Roman Catholics, with very few exceptions, were ashamed of this unhandsome proceeding. And it made not the least difference in the good feeling with which Mr. Burgess parted with all ranks and classes of persons in the "eternal city," Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, native and foreigner.

During my stay at Rome in the winter of 1833-34, I had frequent opportunities of seeing the manner in which the extensive charitable funds placed in the hands of the English clergyman were distributed. Nothing could exceed the patience—except it be the kindness—with which every case

was investigated, and such measure of relief afforded as the urgency of the matter required, and the funds at the chaplain's command enabled him to afford. I should mention that every application required to be certified by some respectable Roman authority ; and also, that either the chaplain himself, or some other English gentleman, took care to visit the house of the applicant, in order to ascertain that there was no fraud, but that the case was one which fell within the intention of the English subscribers to the fund. Of course it was necessary on these visits to avoid every approach to religious discussion, for it must be remembered that, in Rome, to argue on the subject of religion is tantamount to treason against the state. Independently of which, any such attempts at conversion would have proved, as a matter of course, quite fatal to the existence of the English Protestant chapel. It was, therefore, far more prudent and wiser in every respect to avoid any attempt at proselytism, but to let things take effect in the shape of example, and by showing the Roman Catholics at head-quarters what such heretics as the English really were in practice, enable them, silently, to better the instruction.

In the season of 1836-37, Mr. Burgess, who was called away from Rome to take charge of the parish of Upper Chelsea, was succeeded by the

Rev. J. Hutchinson, previously chaplain to the English residents at Florence, with an increase of salary of about £70, upon condition that the duties of the chaplaincy should commence a month earlier in the season and continue a month later than before. The number of visitors in the first two seasons of Mr. Hutchinson's chaplaincy at Rome was greatly diminished because of the prevalence of the cholera in Italy, not only there but in other places, which made the difficulty of getting there very great. This of course lessened the effective pecuniary means of the English chapel, but by the care of the committee, of which John Ingram, Esq. was, and I believe still is, the President, they were enabled not only to pay the increased salary to the clergyman, but to dispense the usual charity to the poor people of Rome. Mr. Hutchinson continued to discharge his duties with assiduity, and without any interference of the authorities. In the season of 1838-39, the subscriptions were so abundant, that the committee were enabled to add to the size of the chapel, by hiring another portion of the granary. The consequent alterations cost about £150. I should have mentioned that, in order to meet any deficiency in the charitable subscriptions, which might arise from sudden political changes on the Continent, calculated to lessen the number of travellers, a

sum amounting to a thousand dollars is invested in the Papal funds. This precaution has become, in a certain degree, necessary, in consequence of the extent and importance of the charities annually dispensed in the manner described, and the sudden withdrawal of which must not only have created great local misery, but might have given birth to feelings hostile to the interests of the tolerated English chapel, which no amount of money could have repressed if once excited. The chapel was reopened for service on the enlarged scale on the 13th of October 1839, and I understand that the congregation every Sunday now amounts to 650 or 700 persons !

Every one must admire the talent and address displayed in overcoming the numerous obstacles which stood in the way of an English Protestant chapel in Rome, many of which, delicacy and a generous consideration for the feelings of persons still alive at Rome, have induced Mr. Burgess to pass over without even an allusion in his narrative. In addition, however, to these, more serious difficulties with which he had to contend, there occurred, from time to time, others of a less grave character, which, if they did not threaten the entire subversion of his little church, were calculated to interfere with its comfort.

Of these the most ludicrous occurred shortly

after the accession of the Pope Leo XII. One Saturday evening the custode or keeper of the English chapel came to announce to Mr. Burgess, with great dismay, that the portion of the building just beneath the chapel had been hired for a show of wild beasts, and that already the pictures were suspended upon the outer-walls, and the next day, Sunday, the chapel staircase leading to the apartment was to be used for the access to the menagerie. The truth was ascertained, and measures were immediately taken to get this scandal stopped, at least for the Sunday; but the "Pidcock" of Rome alleged that he had got the governor's permission, had been all the week fitting up the room at a great expense, and he refused to move. By dint of persuasion, the exhibition was suspended for the Sunday, the pictures remaining unrolled on the walls, and the clergyman being allowed to proceed with no other interruption than the occasional roaring of the "royal beast" below.

The placard announcing that *un gran Leone* was to be seen "fuori della Porta del Popolo" was immediately torn down by the police, as offering too great a temptation to the Roman people, who delight in a bit of satire at the authorities, to pasquinade the real Leone XII., the reigning pontiff!

The committee assembled on the following day,

and applied to the Governor of Rome and the Secretary of State; but it was not until the committee consented to pay 150 scudi for a recompense to the man of beasts for his loss, that he was transferred over the way to a little less objectionable position. The government authorities said they were not aware that the room was so near the English congregation when they gave permission; but surely they ought not to have recompensed the proprietor at the expense of the English, in consequence of their own mistake. In about a fortnight the grand Leone died, and the proprietor gravely applied to the chaplain on Sunday morning just before church, to request that the sum of half a scudo a-head might be collected from the English congregation that day to recompense him for his loss! The ground he took was that the lion had died on account of being so long shut up during his litigation with the heretical committee! The chaplain expressed his wonder how the proprietor could ask such a thing after having so insulted a congregation of worshippers; upon which he became very irate, and said that he now saw the egregious error into which the English had been led. They had taken him, it would seem, for a common showman, ("meneur d'ours," or bear-leader,) with a drum and trumpet at the door, and a man to bawl out,

“Walk up ! walk up !” whereas *he* was “Purveyor of wild beasts to the Emperor of all the Russias,” “fournisseur de l’Empereur,” and never had a man at his door to say so much as “C’est ici !”

I am tempted, before finally quitting Rome, to advert to another successful effort recently made in that celebrated city, to break down the illiberal barrier which, for so many centuries, had existed against those enlightened improvements by which the history of most other countries has been characterised.

It has been well remarked, indeed, that the progress of religious toleration and of genuine charity is synonymous with the advance of Protestantism. Of the truth of this position, a remarkable proof, besides those already adduced, has been lately furnished by the establishment of an institution on the Tarpeian rock, which wears a more determined aspect than even the English chapel, of which the history has just been given.

In adverting to this subject, I cannot do so with so much effect as by translating a part of a manuscript written by Chevalier Bunsen, the distinguished scholar, historian, and statesman, who resided so long at Rome as minister from the court of Prussia. It is entitled “A proposal for the foundation of a charitable establishment for Protestants in general at Rome.”

“Ever since the martyrdom and dispersion of the Vaudois congregations in the thirteenth century, and the extermination of those small churches which sprang out of the great reformation, and which in the sixteenth century were linked together in a chain of evangelical faith from the Alps to Calabria, Rome never possessed a single Protestant establishment within its walls, till the momentous period of the general peace of 1815. Any stray Protestants who found themselves at Rome, antecedent to that epoch, were chiefly isolated travellers making the round of the antiquities, and of the monuments of the fine arts—men of letters visiting the libraries—or artists studying the works of Raphael and Michael Angelo. To these might be added a certain number of domestic servants, chiefly German and Swiss, and a few workmen of different trades, who followed in the wake of the more wealthy strangers. All these foreigners lived at Rome, without the possibility, as it then seemed, of congregating in a religious community, while the greater part of them probably never thought about the matter at all. Even Winkelman had to turn Roman Catholic, in order to profit by the protection of the Albanis and Borgias of those days; or, at all events, he found it prudent, in order to his gaining admission into society, to repress every symptom of regard for the true faith

of the gospel, during his residence in Italy. A still greater degree of caution was necessary on the part of the lower order of the strangers alluded to, unless they chose to run the risk of being entirely thrown out of employment, with the certainty of being exposed to the annoying interference of the police. Nor did this bigoted hostility cease even after death, for the bodies of heretics were assigned no better resting-place than the unconsecrated ground allotted to impenitent malefactors, executed on the scaffold, near the ‘Muro Storto,’ in front of the old entrance to the Villa Borghese.

“It was only about 1770 that the very liberal Pope Ganganelli, Clement XIV., allowed the body of a young German baron to be interred in the open meadow of the Testaccio, adjacent to the pyramid of Cestius. There occur few other examples of a similar privilege, although such things were occasionally allowed upon sufferance, until the period of the French domination. Still it was not till the Continent was fully opened, that the first evidence was given that the true faith, as set forth by the evangelists, had been only revived and strengthened by the mighty struggle. The English, indeed, had become too powerful in the world, and their cause was too manifestly protected by Divine Providence, for the sovereign pontiff to deny them

any longer an asylum for their worship even in his very capital. The memory of the vast services they had rendered to the common cause was too fresh for any opposition to be so much as thought of. Accordingly, a numerous English Protestant congregation were assembled, at first only in a private house in the Forum of Trajan, in consequence of the outcry made by the zealots (*zelanti*) having awakened the conscience of Pius VII.

“In the year 1819, the king of Prussia founded a Protestant chapel, and attached it to the house of the minister, who represented his majesty at the papal court, an establishment which has justly received the blessings of hundreds of families on the Continent. Besides the ordinary German service of this chapel, the worship was occasionally performed in French, and when a Protestant clergyman could be found sufficiently master of Italian, the genuine sound of the gospel was heard even in that language! In process of time, when several families from the canton of the Tessin settled themselves at Rome, the generosity of the king of Prussia, added to the donations of some pious individuals, collected round the chapel a library, composed of Bibles and books of devotion, in German, French, English, and Italian.

“The salutary influence of these establishments was very remarkable, not only on the Protestants themselves, but even on the inhabitants of the country. The strangers, though placed in the very capital of Catholicism, were surrounded by so many associations calculated to awaken the most serious reflections in their minds, in connexion with the sacred events of which those celebrated scenes had been the theatre, that they were naturally brought to consider deeply the things most precious to them on this earth. Accordingly, except in the case of a few wicked or weak-minded persons, the apostacies from the true faith were extremely rare. The native inhabitants, on the other hand, began to admit that those to whom they still refused the name of Christians, really acknowledged and adored the same Saviour, at all events that they did good in his name, and to the glory of God. The ways of the Almighty are veiled in so profound a mystery, especially in countries exclusively Roman Catholic, that it is impossible to say what share these small beginnings may have in the eventual and inevitable triumph of the religion of the Holy Spirit.

“In proportion, however, as these religious institutions advanced, the want of some charitable establishment, founded on the same principles, was more and more felt for. It appeared that there

were in Rome in 1835 the following numbers of fixed Protestants permanently domiciled as residents in that city :—

“Germans, Danes, and Swedes, 140, besides about 50 servants and mechanics; Protestants speaking the French language, 50, with about 20 servants and mechanics; and of English permanent residents about 20; in all nearly 300.”

Such was the state of things, according to M. Bunsen, in the year 1835; and I shall now proceed to mention the steps which that accomplished philanthropic statesman took to meet the exigencies of the case. I should mention, however, that in addition to the fixed residents in Rome, to whom M. Bunsen particularly refers, there are now not fewer upon an average than from 1500 to 2000 foreigners, who, if they cannot be said to reside permanently at Rome, pass at least eight months of the year there. By far the greater number of these are English Protestants, and it was a constant source of regret to the richer persons amongst them, that when their poorer brethren had the misfortune to fall into sickness, and had no means of supporting themselves through it, they were obliged to enter a public hospital. When once there, the unceasing attempts made by the Roman Catholics at proselytism left but little repose to the helpless heretic, until he yielded to the

effects of disease ; or, worse still, to the torture of importunity !

These and many other grave considerations forced themselves upon the enlightened mind of the Prussian envoy, the only representative of any Protestant government at Rome, and whose voice alone, therefore, had any official weight. In the year 1835, the Chevalier Bunsen purchased a whole row of houses close to the residence of the Prussian legation, and adjacent to the Palazzo Cafferelli, on the Monte Caprino, which forms part of the original Tarpeian rock. Aided by subscriptions, of which the greater part were furnished by the English, M. Bunsen proceeded to turn the upper stories of these buildings into one spacious apartment, and fitted it up as an hospital ward. To this he added a school-room, under the impression that the numerous English artists residing in Rome with their families might avail themselves, if they thought fit, of a safe and economical education for their children.

The Chevalier Bunsen was too good a man of business to leave such an institution to the chance support of public-spirited individuals, and therefore as far as was possible he secured it against accident. The following financial statement, which shows what had been done up to the spring of 1836, will no doubt interest persons who have been in the

eternal city, and perhaps amuse those who, from being at a distance, and within constant reach of every kind of assistance in hours of need, can scarcely be aware of the difficulties which are encountered abroad, especially by persons whose means are small.

	Scudi.	Bajocchi.*
The sum total received on account of building the institution, in March 1836 - - -	10,918	41
Expended on the building and for the rent -	9,998	66
Leaving in hand a balance of - - -	919	75

But it was estimated that about 3000 more scudi would still be required to complete the establishment. The income was calculated at 644 scudi, arising from the following sources:—

	Scudi.
1st. Ground rent, paid by the King of Prussia - -	120
2nd. Rent of habitations let off - - -	230
3rd. Ditto from various other tenants - - -	104
4th. Rent from the chaplain of the legation - - -	180
The whole sum in the shape of endowments is about (in scudi) - - - - -	644

or about £143.

A scudo, it will be observed by the note at p. 251, varies in value from 4s. to 4s. 2d. English money.

It was arranged that whoever subscribed 300

* 10 "Bajocchi" make 1 "Paulo," 10 "Pauli" make 1 "Scudo." The Exchange varies from 46 to 48 Pauls for £1 sterling.

scudi should have the right of placing one sick person at all times in the hospital ; and it has been found by the experience of several years that the institution has fully answered the charitable purpose intended.

The subscriptions continued to be received, and all to go on successfully under the able management of the Chevalier Bunsen, up to the period of his leaving Rome in the beginning of 1839. But since the diplomatic relations between the Papal court and that of Berlin have been suspended, in consequence of the affair of the Bishop of Cologne, the whole of the important charitable work has been "in jeopardy every hour." It is even said that the Duca di Caffarelli has been severely handled for selling or leasing his property for such purposes. It does not appear, however, that the Papal government has gone so far as to annul the contract.

An unfortunate expression which appeared in a Swiss newspaper—the "Gazette de Lausanne"—about three years ago, had nearly proved fatal to this charitable institution ; and the anecdote is curious from its showing the state of ultrasensitiveness in which a government so constructed must at all times exist. What would become of it if it were exposed to one thousandth part of the attacks to which free governments are

hourly exposed, but which instead of shaking them, only make them the firmer ! It was stated in the paper alluded to, as a remarkable circumstance, that the whole of that part of the Capitoline Hill which overlooked the Forum, comprising the Tarpeian rock, had now become Protestant ! This terrific paragraph was soon read in the ears of the Pope, who, taking alarm, sent to the Prussian envoy to know the meaning of such a “sproposito.”

In reply to this inquiry it was truly, but most adroitly stated that as the cholera was expected to visit Rome next, and as the Romans would doubtless, in that fearful event, have sufficient use for all their hospitals, his Prussian majesty deemed it right to make these preparations. Not only was this advisable on account of his own subjects, but also that they might not become burdensome, at such an alarming moment, to the Apostolic Chamber. It was further remarked to the astonished and terrified pontiff—for the dread of the cholera in Italy exceeds all belief—that no situation in Rome could be so eligible as the Monte Caprino, which never could become a frequented district, in consequence of the impossibility of a carriage approaching it.

With these and similar arguments the holy father was pacified, or, at all events, the zealous ecclesiastics, who had frightened the head of the church with the “Gazette de Lausanne,” were

silenced for the time, and before they could marshal a fresh attack, the cholera came in good earnest, and then they were ready enough to acknowledge that the Protestant envoy had done well.

I have lately been informed that the greater part of the money required for the completion of this truly philanthropic institution has been raised by subscription last winter, chiefly through the exertions of the Rev. George Porcher. It is also of importance to the well-being of the establishment of this hospital, that foreigners who possess competent means have repaired to it, and instead of accepting assistance as a charity, have defrayed their own expenses. One of these, an Englishman, a highly respectable tradesman, expressed himself well satisfied with the care and attention he met with.

To persons accustomed to the ready means of medical assistance which England affords in every village, some of these details may seem trivial—but to those who are best acquainted with the Continent, the establishment of a well-managed hospital, open to all strangers, in the city of Rome, will be hailed with great satisfaction.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE ENGLISH PROTESTANT CHAPELS IN
TUSCANY, SARDINIA, AND FRANCE.

BESIDES the English chapels at Geneva and Rome, the rise and progress and present state of which have been fully detailed in the last two chapters, there are similar establishments in various other parts of Italy, as well as in France, which require that a few observations should be made respecting them.

In Tuscany, where the toleration is ample, and does honour to the government, there are no less than four, viz. at Florence, Leghorn, Pisa, and Lucca Baths. Those at Pisa and Lucca Baths, however, may be considered as forming but one chaplaincy, as the English reside only half the year at each place. At Leghorn, as recently as the 28th May 1840, a new church was opened for divine service according to the rites of the church of England. This is, I believe, the first Protestant edifice that has ever been reared in Italy expressly

for public worship. Permission has also been obtained for erecting a chapel at Pisa, as soon as funds can be raised for the purpose ; a piece of ground has already been purchased for £260, the whole of which has been raised among the English residents. At Lucca Baths a chapel is rapidly proceeding, and is to be finished by the end of next May. The Grand Duke of Lucca, as well as the Grand Duke of Tuscany, have given the English the assurance of their special protection ; “ *E de nostra piena soddisfazione,*” said the Duke of Lucca, “ *che veggiamo sorgere un nuovo tempio al culto di Dio.*” The service at Florence is still carried on in hired apartments, and it is much to be wished that the concerns of that institution should be conducted in a manner more consonant with what we have been taught to consider a church of England sense of propriety. Florence is the only place in Italy where, as I am informed, the worshippers are required to take a ticket, and pay first when they present themselves as strangers at the door of the chapel ! The highly respectable clergyman who now fills that chaplaincy will probably succeed in persuading the committee to adopt the more suitable, or at all events more agreeable, system pursued at Rome for raising funds.

There are also English chapels at Nice, Genoa,

Naples, and occasionally at Venice. At the three former places they have had to contend for existence with the intolerance of the Government. The chapel at Nice, which is a separate building originally erected at the expense of a few English persons, has frequently been threatened with extinction. His Sardinian Majesty, Charles Felix, was heard to declare, that if his predecessor and brother, Victor Emmanuel, had not granted permission for a chapel at Genoa, he never would have consented to such an enormity. At Naples, the contest has been very recently renewed, and, as it appears, in the midst of the sulphur question, bigotry has triumphed. Now that is settled, we may hope for better things. The British act of Parliament, which provides for the establishment of divine worship in all ports or places where H.M.'s subjects are residing in numbers for trade and other purposes, has been treated with contempt at Naples, and threatened with frustration in Sardinia; while in Tuscany, where full liberty is given to the British subject to worship God after the manner of his fathers, no less than three chapels and a "full-grown" church are now flourishing.

It must be evident to all who have travelled on the Continent, and observed the influence which the English exercise over the feelings of the people, that it is of the greatest consequence that those

institutions should present a good specimen of the practical working of our ecclesiastical system. But as this of course must depend on the individual clergyman placed at the head of each, it has happened, that in several instances the Anglo-Italian chapels have been unfortunate in this respect, and have exhibited to the inquiring natives either inefficiency, or what is worse, strife and contention of parties. This arises in a great measure from the circumstance of those chapels being placed under no episcopal controul. Rome, however, has afforded the singular and edifying example of a large body of British subjects from all the three kingdoms meeting together, for a quarter of a century, in one assembly, of one heart, and one soul, without any schism or division. This is the more worthy of remark, as there has seldom been a winter when there were not bodies of Scotch presbyterians, besides various dissenters both Americans and English, large enough to have formed one or more separate congregations, yet in no instance has that been attempted, but all these different sects and nations have agreed to kneel at the same altar, and worship in the same place ! This voluntary and cordial union of the spirit in the bond of peace may be a fair set-off against the unity of a spiritual despotism. But this, alas ! has not been the case in other places ; and, ac-

cordingly, the best interests of religion, as we should wish to see them maintained, have in consequence suffered in the eyes of the Roman Catholics. On every account, it is a matter of much congratulation, that, in the scheme lately propounded by the Bishop of London for increasing the number of our colonial bishops he proposes, that there should be a Bishop of Malta or Gibraltar, under whose jurisdiction would be brought all the clergy officiating on or near the shores of the Mediterranean.

The remarkable and every way important communication above alluded to is contained in a letter dated 24th April 1840, written by the Bishop of London to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and published in the Ecclesiastical Gazette, No. 23, on the 12th of May last. The whole letter is worthy of the most attentive perusal, for it will satisfy any one who wishes well to the cause of religion, that its interests may be essentially promoted by extending the influence of church government to various parts of Europe, as well as to our remotest colonies. In this view, the zealous and experienced writer proposes that there should be some episcopal authority planted in every place abroad where Englishmen congregate in numbers, and where, as in Italy for example, there are already in action many detached chapels, but which are unconnected

by any system of discipline, and unaided by the general superintendence of any pastoral authority whatsoever. The consequence is, their exertions are often of little avail, and the evils of ill understood concert, or no concert at all, are sometimes severely felt. The experiment of appointing bishops to India and the West Indies has succeeded so completely, that there can be no longer any doubt of the vast advantage of extending the system to other places. The only difficulty is how this point is to be accomplished.

“The *first* work to be done,” says the Bishop of London, “is to supply the want of completeness in the church which already exists in several of our colonies and distant dependencies. I would mention as examples, the Cape of Good Hope, the island of Ceylon, Van Diemen’s Land, and New Zealand, which may be regarded as being virtually one of our colonies. MALTA may also be considered as the station of a bishop, who might exercise a salutary superintendence over those of our clergy who officiate as chaplains in the seaports and towns *upon* the coast, or *near* the coast of the Mediterranean, and, perhaps, Gibraltar.” “I speak,” continues the Bishop of London, “with some knowledge of the circumstances, which show how desirable it is that a bishop should be placed in some of those places; having references con-

tinually made to me upon matters of great importance to the cause of religion and the church, from English clergymen and congregations in foreign parts, which I am obliged to settle as well as I can, without any legitimate jurisdiction over the parties, and without any means of inquiring personally into the facts which form the subject of their appeals to me. Your grace's own experience will confirm the accuracy of this representation. And besides this, it is obvious, that our church is not seen in her full and fair proportions by the strangers among whom she dwells. The defect of those ordinances, which can be received only at the hands of the highest order of the ministry, the absence of due regulation for spiritual authority on the part of the clergy, and the want of a common bond of connexion between them, are disadvantageously contrasted with the discipline and completeness of other churches, in themselves perhaps less perfect or less pure than our own.”*

It was my wish to have added a short sketch of the state of the English chapels in other parts of the Continent, and particularly in France, where all that I have heard tends strongly to show the wisdom and immediate practical importance of the view taken by the Bishop of London. But as I

* Bishop of London's letter of the 24th April 1840.

have had no personal experience of the working of the system, or rather of the absence of all system, I feel unwilling to do more than call the attention of those who may not only have this vital subject at heart, but have sufficient influence to give the generous impulses, which no doubt exist, a better direction, for the good of the church.

I am told that the chapels in France are, generally speaking, in a most unsatisfactory condition. This chiefly arises from the want of superintendence, by reason of which the concerns of several of those chapels fall into the hands of a few laymen, sometimes not of the best description. These persons appoint, and then remove, a chaplain at their pleasure, until, at length, no clergyman of any respectability will undertake the charge. There does not appear at present any mode of correcting these evils, except by the local exertions of disinterested and pious individuals.

In Paris, it is true, the zealous and amiable Bishop Luscombe has long officiated, and very respectably maintained the dignity of divine worship, and several other pious and accomplished ministers have delivered the word of God to the multitudes of English who flock to that capital. Among these I must not omit to name my excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Lovat, the successor of the Rev. Lewis Way, the remarkable man who

created the chapel in the Avenue de Neuilly, and gave a great impulse to the cause of religion in Paris. There may not, therefore, be much room for complaint, on the score either of doctrine or of discipline in that great capital. But, were the task not invidious, instances might perhaps be adduced to show how essential it is to the welfare and character of our church abroad, that its clergymen on the coasts of France should be placed under a bishop or suffragan of Jersey or Guernsey. That this would add greatly to their own respectability and happiness, and powers of being useful to their countrymen, I cannot doubt, any more than that it would contribute to give foreigners a far juster conception of what the church of England really is, than they ever can have under the present working of the voluntary system in France. I am afraid even to allude to some scenes I have heard of the contests for a clergyman in different parts of that country.

As things are at present arranged, I see no possible way of mending this matter, at least in cases like the above, where the English are congregated in such great numbers as to form a considerable proportion of the whole society, and where, without their having the established usages of England to check extravaganees, a sort of wealthy democracy has been got up, amenable

neither to the habits of their own country, nor to those of their temporary adoption. In such places, it is difficult to exaggerate the effect which springs from the absence of all wholesome control, in deteriorating the national character. On the other hand, it is incalculable what good might be done by the steady instrumentality of a well-regulated church establishment among them.

The evil assumes a different complexion in those parts of France where, instead of a large number of English residents, as in the cases above alluded to, only a few are gathered together. But the mischief arising from the entire absence of wholesome control in the nomination of clergymen, and the want of due superintendence over their duties afterwards, is perhaps even greater than it is in the tumultuous instances slightly hinted at, where the excessive scandal of the electioneering transactions forces reflection even on the most unthinking. What hope, it may be asked, can there be of a congregation being properly served, when such means are resorted to as are described in the following anecdote, which I have heard from good authority.

Not long ago an advertisement appeared in the papers for a chaplain wanted at a certain small town. He was to be perfection in every point, and was to receive a salary of about £100 a-year. A clergy-

man duly qualified went over to France, on purpose to see if the situation was likely to suit him. When he arrived at the place he was received by two of Her Majesty's subjects, who represented the small body of English residents on the spot.

The clergyman, who possessed some fortune, was a gentleman by birth, as well as in manners and opinions, and the deputies did him the honour to point out the great advantages of being admitted to the dignity of their chaplain; but on coming to closer quarters, he found there were some strange conditions to be fulfilled.

He was informed that, in no case, was he to baptise a child, or to bury a corpse, or to marry a couple, without first asking their permission!—Neither was he to allow any brother clergyman to ascend his pulpit, nor to enter his reading-desk, without the leave of the committee!!

He listened to this new version of his clerical duties with undisturbed gravity, and then inquired what salary the chaplain might expect to receive from such a well-regulated institution? To which one of the authorities, not at all in jest, replied, £40 per annum!

It would seem as if these gentlemen had forgotten that we are not now living in the days of Goldsmith, when a man of education was held to

be "passing rich with forty pounds a-year." At all events, this proved rather too much for the risible faculties of the gentleman, who had gone so far in search of occupation in a position where he hoped his exertions might be useful. But the two lay deacons saw no joke in the matter, and became irate; upon which the clergyman took his leave, and said that, although it happened to be of no consequence to *him*, to be put to the trouble and expense of a journey, it was scarcely fair to entice, by advertisement, other persons less able than himself to bear the burden of such a trip.

Now, if this is to be taken as a specimen of the manner in which English chapels anywhere abroad may be conducted, it will show, I think, the great importance of placing, so far as may be possible, the nomination of chaplains in the hands of a highly educated authority, responsible to his order, and to the country, for the due exercise of his episcopal functions.

However the point of original nomination may be considered, there must, I should imagine, be but one opinion as to the great benefit which would spring from placing the chaplains, *after their appointment*, under the authority of a bishop of the Established Church, rather than exposing them to the control of ill-informed or ill-advised persons,

who, although they would be the first to assail the power and authority of their bishops at home, would not hesitate, when abroad, to exercise ten times more power over the unprotected chaplains of their little expatriated congregations !

END OF VOL. 1.

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